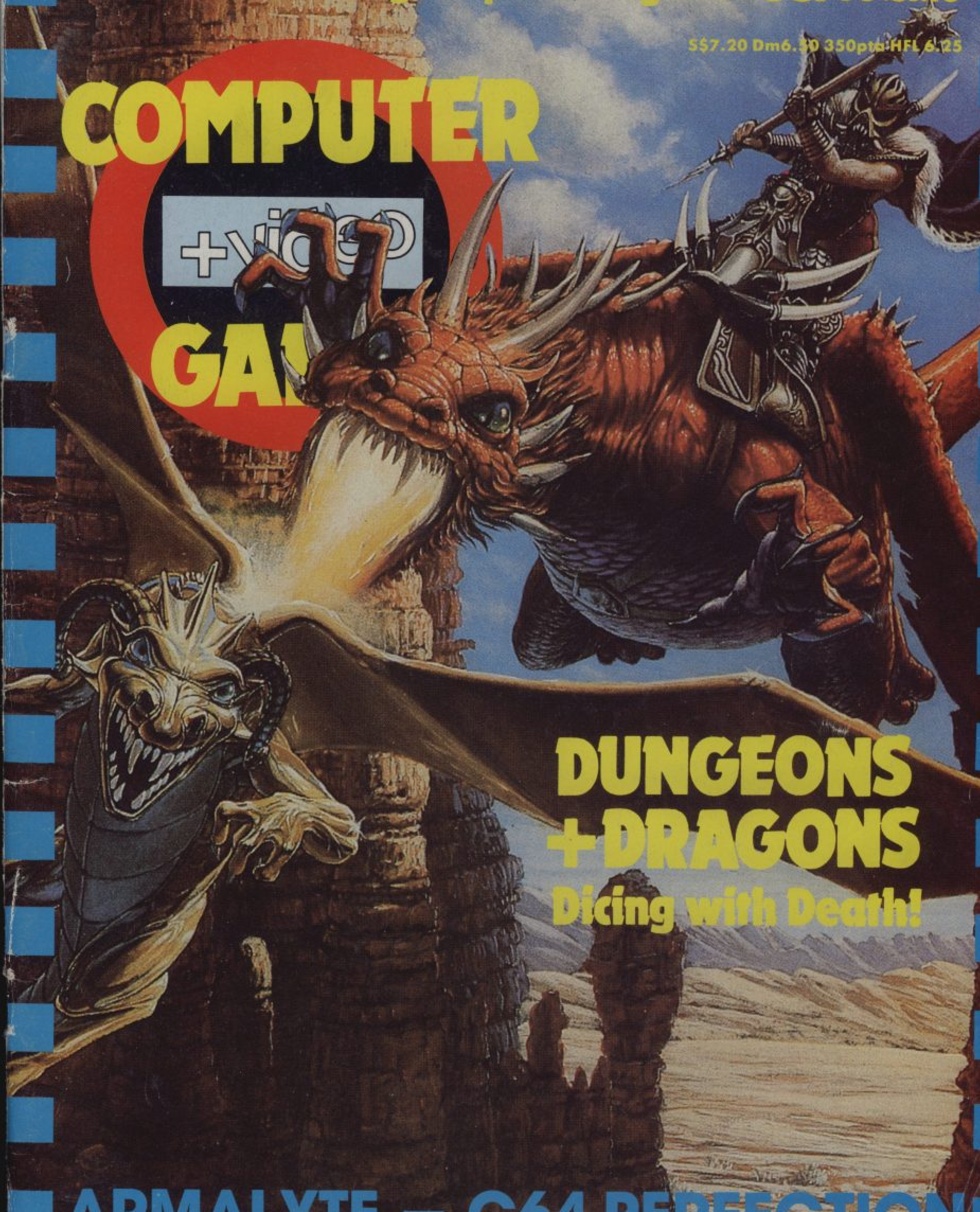
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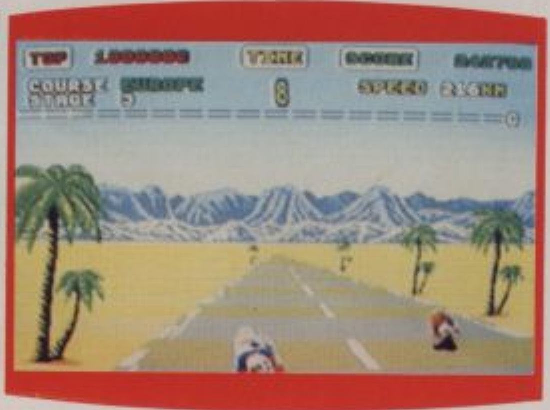
ARMALYTE — C64 PERFECTION

PLAYMASTERS: MICKEY MOUSE MAPPED, BARD'S TALE PLAYERS GUIDE

REVIEWS: ROCKET RANGER EXCLUSIVE, STAR RAY, INTENSITY, VINDICATOR. WIN: A LOAD OF BALLS

'HANG ON IN THERE....'





ATARI ST screen shots **shown.**

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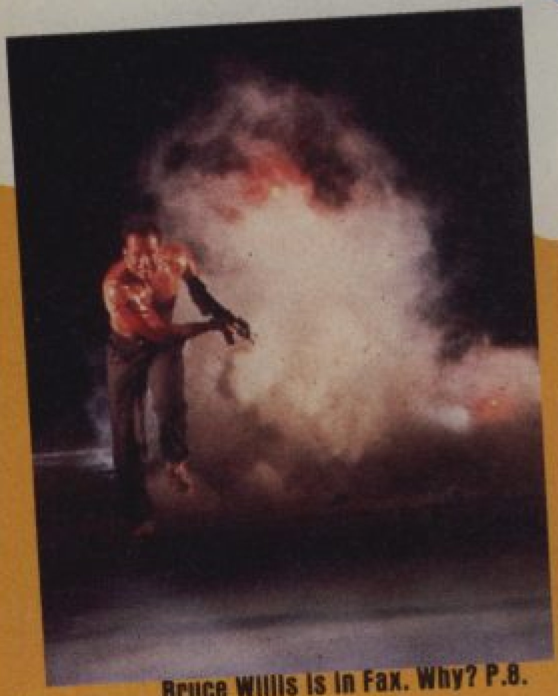
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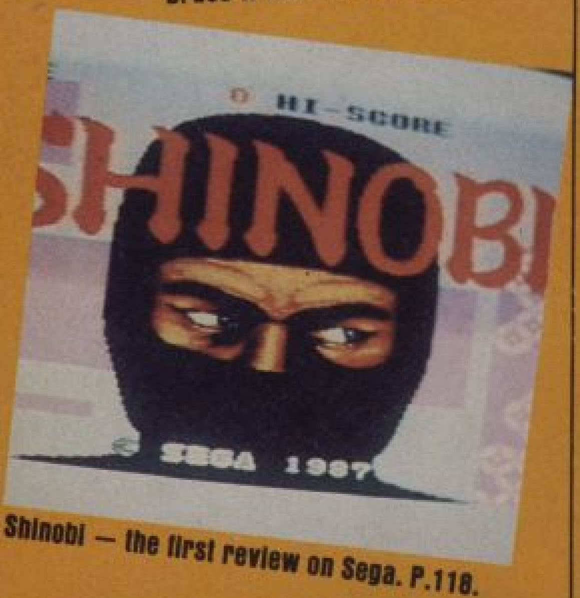
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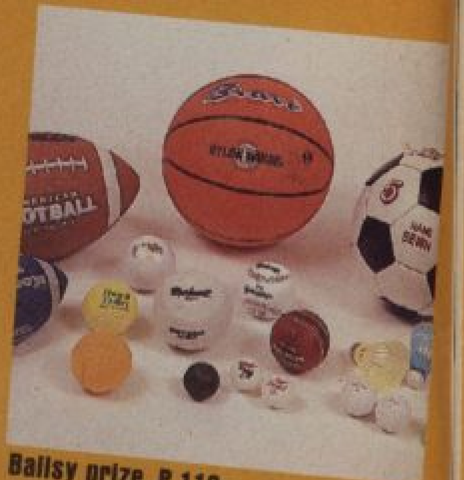
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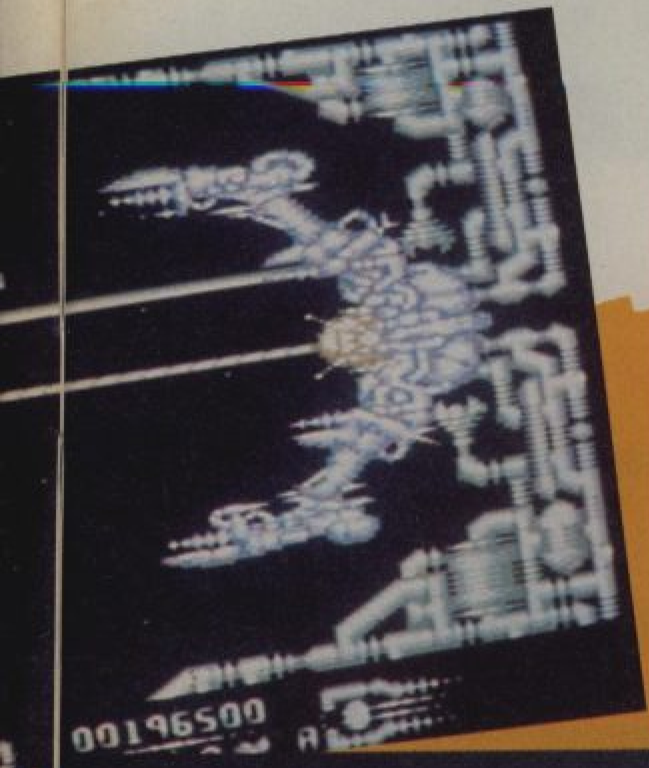


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Editor: Eugene Lacey, Deputy Editor: Paul Boughton. Sub Editor: Seamus St. John. Staff Writer: Matt Bielby. Art Editor: Craig Kennedy. Advertisement Manager: Garry Williams. Sales Executive: S

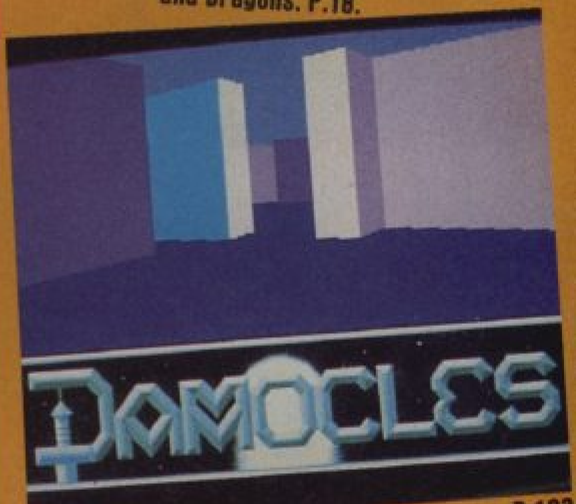
Don't miss...

It's a stonking good PC show of an issue . . . Whatta we got? We got lots. Start off by checking out the role playing game launch of all time – Advanced Dungeons and Dragons. C + VG has exclusive first reviews of these mega launches plus a chance to win a stonking great pile of AD&D goodies. Playmasters has a complete guide to Bards Tale, you might win a load of balls, and Fax is packed with games, gadgets and fun. C + VG – The only mag with stonking appeal.

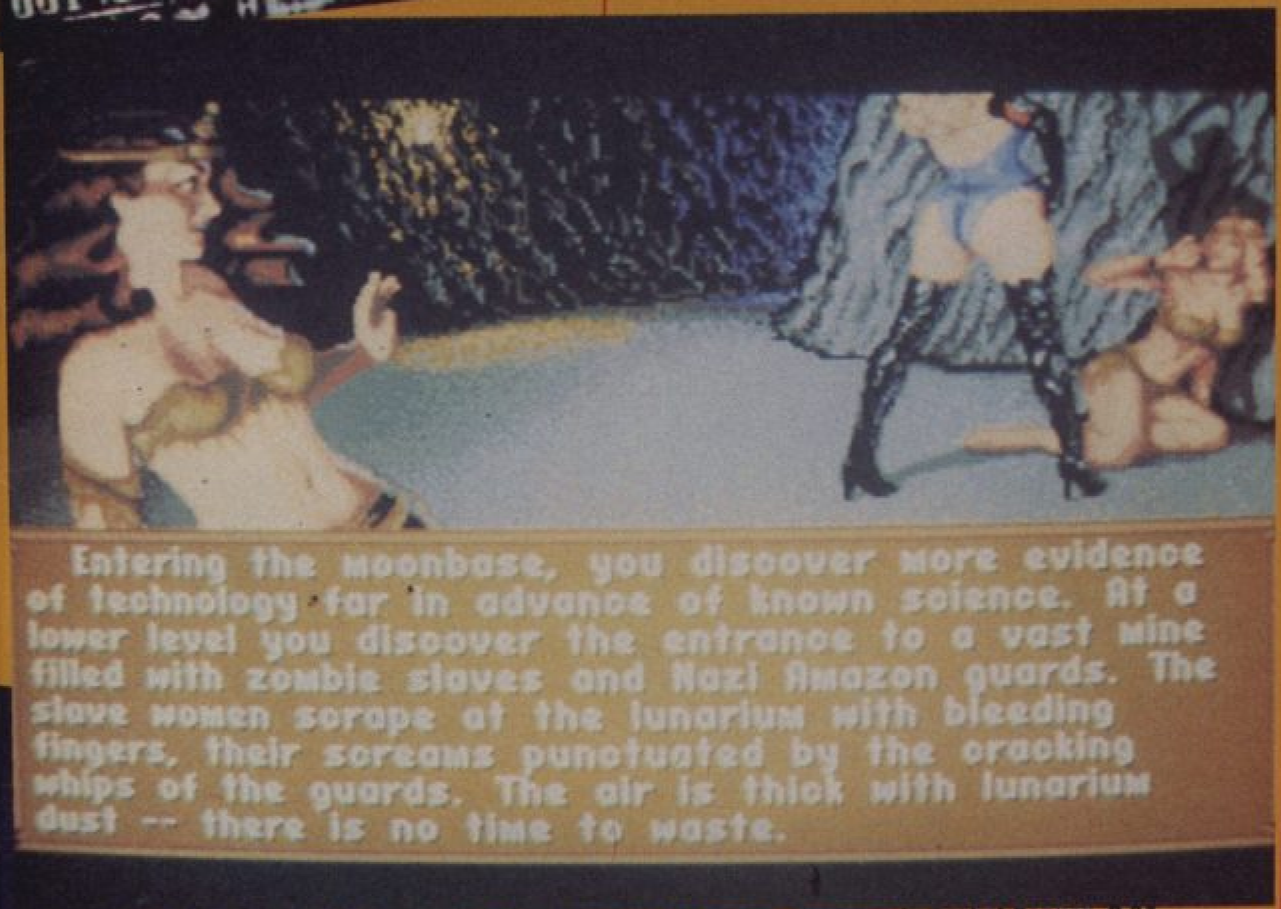




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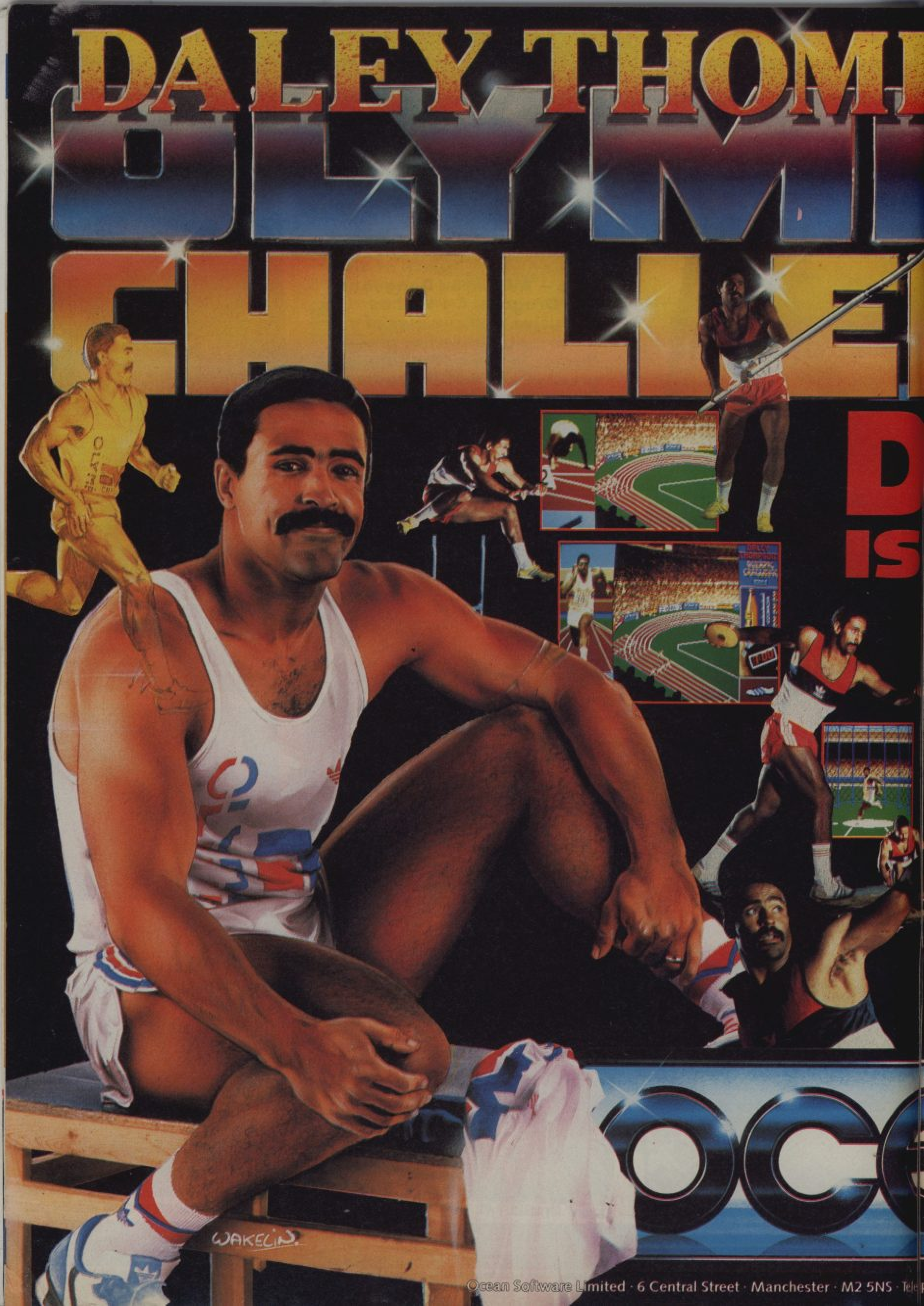


Summer Olympiad. P.43.



Dracula FRP. P.74.

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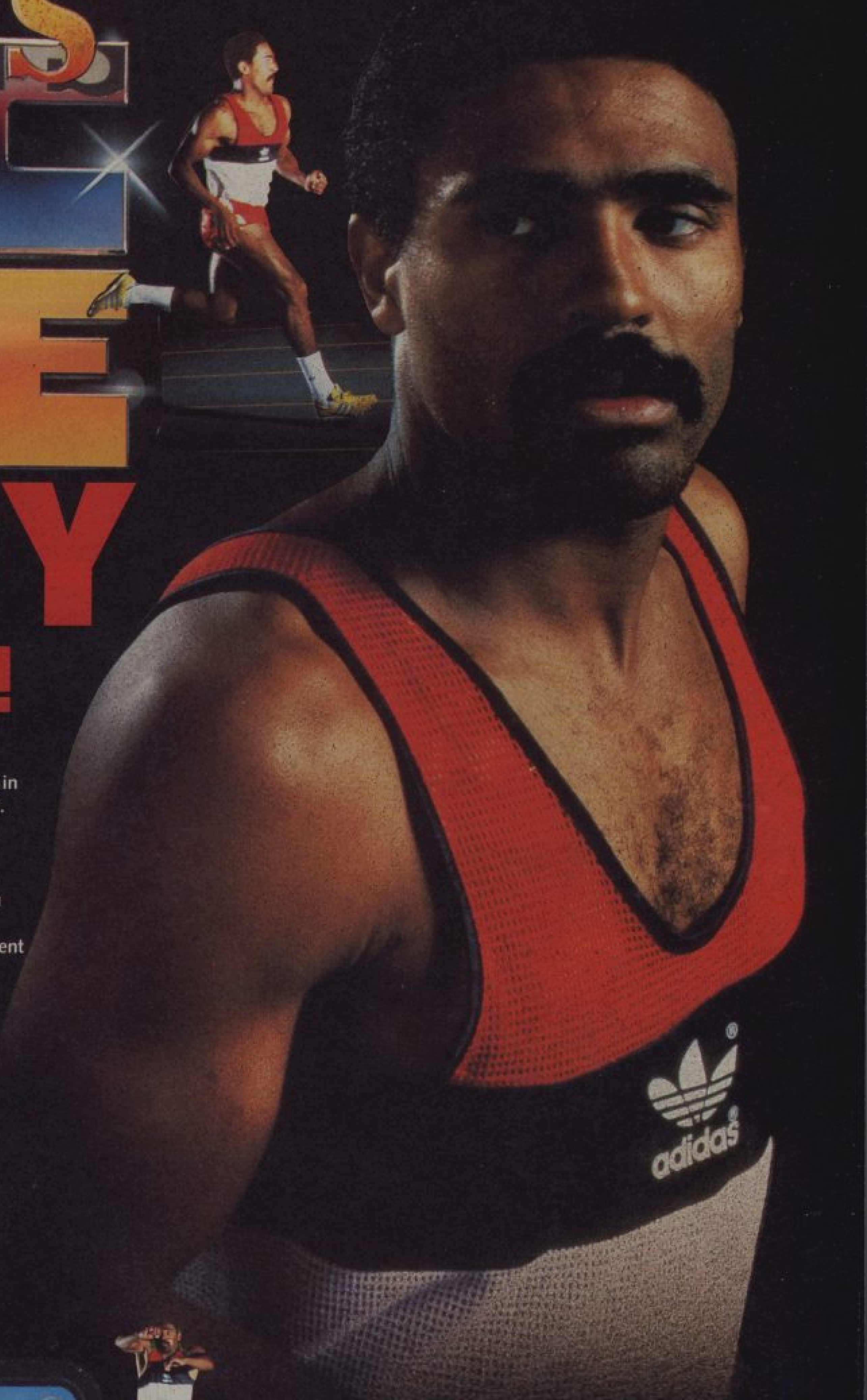
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Veterans' Day







Yet another new label enters the 16 bit fray, with their launch at the PC show in September (ie. about now). Software Horizons launch with three new ST/Amiga blasts: Veteran, which features commando action not a million miles away from Operation Wolf; Luxor, a planet bound shoot 'em up which bears a slight resemblance to a side view of Space Harrier, and Mafdet, action Egyptian style.

All look rather nice if not over-burdened with originality, but there's no complaining about the pricing – at £14.95 they're a snip!!

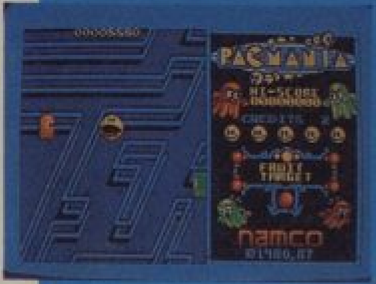
The Packman Cometh

Pac is back in Grand Slam's newest license featuring possibly the most famous (and easiest to draw!) sprite of them all! Pacmania follows the arcade game closely on all major 8 and 16 bit formats, taking the little smiling chappie through a number of three dimensional mazes.

Pacmania differs from the original game in that you only see a small section of the maze at any one time, making picking up those last elusive pills more of a problem. The usual selection of ghosts of varying degrees of stupidity loiter around, though you can use speed pills and a new-found jumping ability to avoid their deadly touch.

You can battle through Sandbox land, the jungly steps and the rest in mid-October for lucky ST, Amiga and Speccy owners (£19.95/£8.95 respectively), with C64 and Amstrad in November (£9.95 cass, £14.95 disc).

Their conversion of the new board game "sensation" Espionage should be available at around the same time.





War Zones

The strategic war game simulation *Balance of Power* gets updated this year with new nations added. Dubbed the 1990 edition it features new trouble zones of strategic importance: Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan and Nicaragua, though with the way things are developing in at least some of those states, this version will soon be as outdated as the last one.

Your task is to survive eight years in office without initiating war in your position as either US President or General Secretary of the Soviet Union. It will be available in November for IBM PC and Amiga.

Just Hang On A Minute...

... don't turn that page! To celebrate the launch of Electric Dreams' Super Hang On, the best race game to date, we've got a lovely little competition to run where you get a once in a lifetime chance to win a Kawasaki ZXS1500 racing bike! Actually, that's a total lie, but Activision has been good enough to provide us with the next best thing, a rather whizzo Mountain bike worth a cool £360, to ride home in style. All you have to do is answer these three simple(ish) questions and the "Blizzard" could be yours.

Question one: Which four continents are featured in the game Super Hang On?

Question two: Your Super Hang On bike is assisted by Nitrous Oxide Injection. By what more common name in this gas known?

Question three: Where is this year's British Motorcyle Grand Prix held?

First correct slip out of the sack wins the bike, the next 25 get exclusive posters of the game. Write to: Super Hang On Compo, C + VG, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Name.....

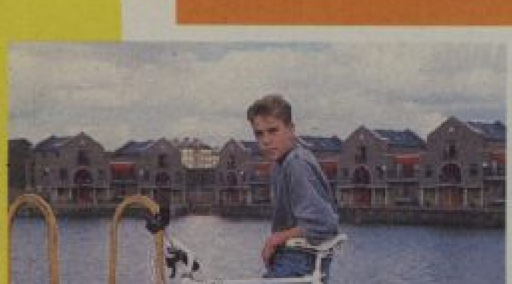
Address.....

Age.....

Question One.....

Question Two.....

Question Three.....



Imperius Rex!





Martech's 8 bit shoot 'em up Rex (originally to have been dubbed Zenith) is to be available in September for Amstrad, Spectrum (shown) and C64. Looks like a relatively standard addition to the shoot 'em up genre.



Golden Demon Awards

The Golden Demon Awards are a unique event in the role player's calendar – Mark Smiddy went along to find out more

The Golden Demon Awards are held annually in Nottingham by Games Workshop, where model painters of all ages show off their talents and compete gainst each other for the coveted two-handed Golden Demon Slayer sword. Included in this year's events were medieval combat displays, a fancy dress and speed painting contest as well many of the experts displaying their creative talents.

Of the main event, one of the judges remarked that all of the entries had been of a very high standard, some even surpassing the work of the pros themselves.

Overall winner of the contest was Ivan Barfleet – with his vigenette of a battle mammoth. The beautifully crafted figure was built from scratch and the result of over 400 hours work. Ivan comes from Birmingham and is now a freelance figure painter after studying design at university.

Bryan Ansell – the man described as the Richard Branson of the games world – sees the future of role-playing games in computers. He told C + VG "We already have plans to create the ultimate system on the new generation of 16 bit computers like the Amiga, ST and Macintosh." And, although he was understandably cagey about details, he would concede that the system could involve hundreds of human players all linked by a single super computer. "This system will be the closest thing to real life as yet," he added.

But are board games dead yet? Jervis Johnson – designer of the sporting spoof, Blood Bowl – told C + VG that it was expected to sell over five million units in its lifespan. Similar figure are expected for other recent titles with the new Warhammer 40,000 currently outselling everything.

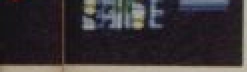
Tennis Accolade

E.A.'s Accolade label release a series of new sports sims for the Christmas market. *Serve and Volley* is a tennis game with different levels of difficulty, a selection of serves and hits (slice, lob etc) and a two player option. Each match can be saved for later, and the computer can make predictions on results based on past performance. It all sounds dead whizzo.

Other new sims are *T.K.O.*, a boxing game with big sprites and realistic broken lips (ugh!), *Rack 'em* (a snooker sim) and Fast Break (a basketball sim where you can select pre-set offensive and defensive plays or develop your own).

They all sound like very comprehensive and thorough representations, though perhaps you'll have to be an expert in each particular sport before you can play them! All are £9.95/14.95 on C64 and are staged through September (Serve and Volley) to December (T.K.O.) at monthly intervals. PC versions (£24.95) will be available for the tennis and snooker games.



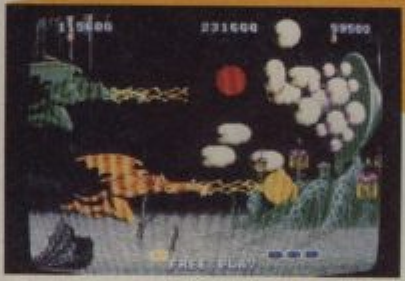




Sega Activision in '89

Activision has signed for five of the top new Sega arcade games conversion rights. These include space shoot 'em up Galaxy Force, currently the number one arcade game in the US and Japan; chase/beat 'em up Altered Beast; Sonic Boom, fighter plane game; Hot Rod racing game and Ace Attacker, volleyball sports sim.

The titles will appear some on the Activision label, some packaged as Electric Dreams. C + VG arcade aces Clare Edgeley and Seamus St John have to admit they were non too impressed with Galaxy force for one in the arcades, but we all know that has nothing to do with it making a good home computer home . . . don't we?



TIME TUNNELS

Times of Lore, on Microprose's Origin label, comes out in early September on the 64, with Amstrad, Amiga, ST, IBM and Speccy following later in the month. The shots are from a slightly unfinished version, so it should be looking pretty hot by release time.



SPECTRUM TOP TEN

1	European Five-a-Side – Firebird
2	Football Manager 2 – Addictive
3	Beach Buggy Sim – Firebird
4	Where Time Stood Still – Ocean
5	Stunt Bike Simulator – Firebird
6	Air Wolf – Encore
7	Ghostbusters – Mastertronic
8	Rocky Horror Show – Alternative
9	Battleships – Encore
10	Frank Bruno's Boxing – Encore

European Five a Side returns to the top spot alongside two other high rising Firebird cheapies, and Ocean's Where Time Stood at last enters the top ten at number four.

AMSTRAD TOP TEN

1	Football Manager 2 – Addictive
2	Air Wolf – Encore
3	ACE – Cascade
4	Stunt Bike Simulator – Firebird
5	Rocky Horror Show – Alternative
6	Super Stuntman – Codemasters
7	Beach Buggy Sim – Firebird
8	Battleships – Encore
9	European Five-a-Side – Firebird
10	Frank Bruno's Boxing – Encore

Football Manager 2 retains its grip on the top of the charts, as Stunt Bike Sim and Battleships re-enter. The number one spot is the only one held down by a full prize game.

C64 TOP TEN

1	Football Manager – Addictive
2	European Five-a-Side – Firebird
3	Bruce Lee – Americana
4	Battleships – Encore
5	Ninja Scooter Sim – Firebird
6	ACE – Cascade
7	Yogi Bear – Alternative
8	Rally Driver – Alternative
9	Stunt Bike Simulator – Firebird
10	Sam Fox Strip Poker – React

European Five-a-Side goes up 12 to 12, while Footie Manager 2 is once more the only full pricer in the top ten.

Fax

Powerplay

Latest in the 16 bit 3D graphics stuff is Powerdrome from Electronic Arts. It's a futuristic racing sim from UK programmer Michael Powell, featuring humps, turns and sliding gates as obstacles in a low level jet race.

There are six races set on different planets with different backdrops and weather conditions to be aware of, chances to tune your racer to optimum performance and a duel player option that apparently requires you to link two machines. There is even the now familiar rear view display showing the following racers. ST is out in late September at £24.95, with the Amiga following in November.



Skelter Glimpsed



Paul Woakes is a very busy man indeed. Not only is he currently working on Damocles (see feature on page 12) he's also developing a new space shoot 'em up called Skelter. It features filled-vector graphics, is played from some very unusual perspectives and looks like a sort of 3D Asteroids. More news when we have it; as for now you'll have to make do with this screenshot.

Spit and Polish

"It really is completely brilliant!", says Domark modestly, and indeed, it is quite a licence to get their mits on. For lo! they have acquired the rights to TV satire show Spitting Image, and promise us a suitably irrerevant computer game. You get to oppose six world leaders (Maggie, "Mad dog" Reagan, Gorby, P.W. Botha, or his holiness the Pope) in a battle for world power.

Can you rumble their devious ruses, or will they retain credibility and get control? At least there's no problem of power corrupting: they're all corrupt already!

We're promised hilarious fights, toilet humour and the odd naughty word. But will it be funny? That's what counts. Available on all major 8 and 16 bit formats well in time for Christmas.

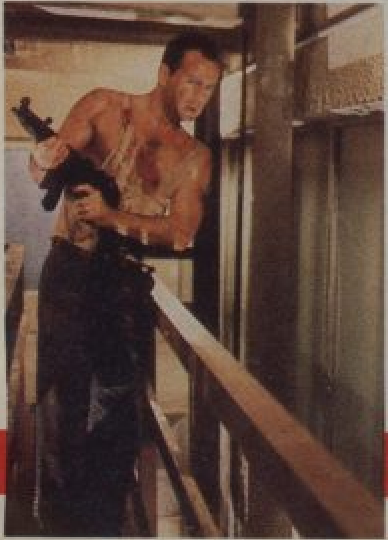


Bruce Willis Invaders

Mediagenic has signed up Moonlighting "superstar" Bruce Willis for their latest project. Or, rather, they've got his image on sprite for Die Hard, a cop thriller with a Christmas feel. Bruce will be playing a wise-cracking but hard boiled detective laying seige to 12 holed up terrorists. The film is apparently doing exceptional business in the States even as we speak, but you'll have to hold off until next year for the game.

Meanwhile, big Arnie Schwarzenegger will soon be the undisputed king of the sprites as his little figure appears on yet more programs. Gram Slam now has the rights to the Running Man sci-fi thriller (see Big Screen) while Ocean are planning to convert his as yet unreleased Red Russian cop film.

Elite also have their computer sports quiz a Question of Sport based on the well known TV show for October, but since it's not half as glam as the rest, we won't mention it.



Interstellar Pursuit



Available shortly is Genus II – Trivial Pursuit, Domark's second attempt to convert the famous board game to the small screen. The game sends you from a doomed earth in search of the paradise world Genus II, on a trip on which you can only make progress by proving your mettle at triv with the various alien brings you meet. New questions and and an extensive framing sequence help make it quite a step on/away from (take your pick) the original concept of the game.

ALL FORMATS COMBINED TO TOP TEN

1	Football Manager 2 – Addictive
2	European Five a Side – Firebird
3	Air Wolf – Encore
4	ACE – Cascade
5	Stunt Bike Simulator – Firebird
6	Steve Davis S'ker – Blue Ribbon
7	Frank Bruno's Boxing – Encore
8	Beach Buggy Simulator – Firebird
9	Battleships – Elite
10	Way of the E'dng Fist – M'tronic

Firebird continues to outsell Alternative overall by a tiny margin, but both must keep a watch out for Encore who once again increase their market share considerably. Though Virus continues to do well, it is the footie games that dominate this time round.

ATARI ST TOP TEN

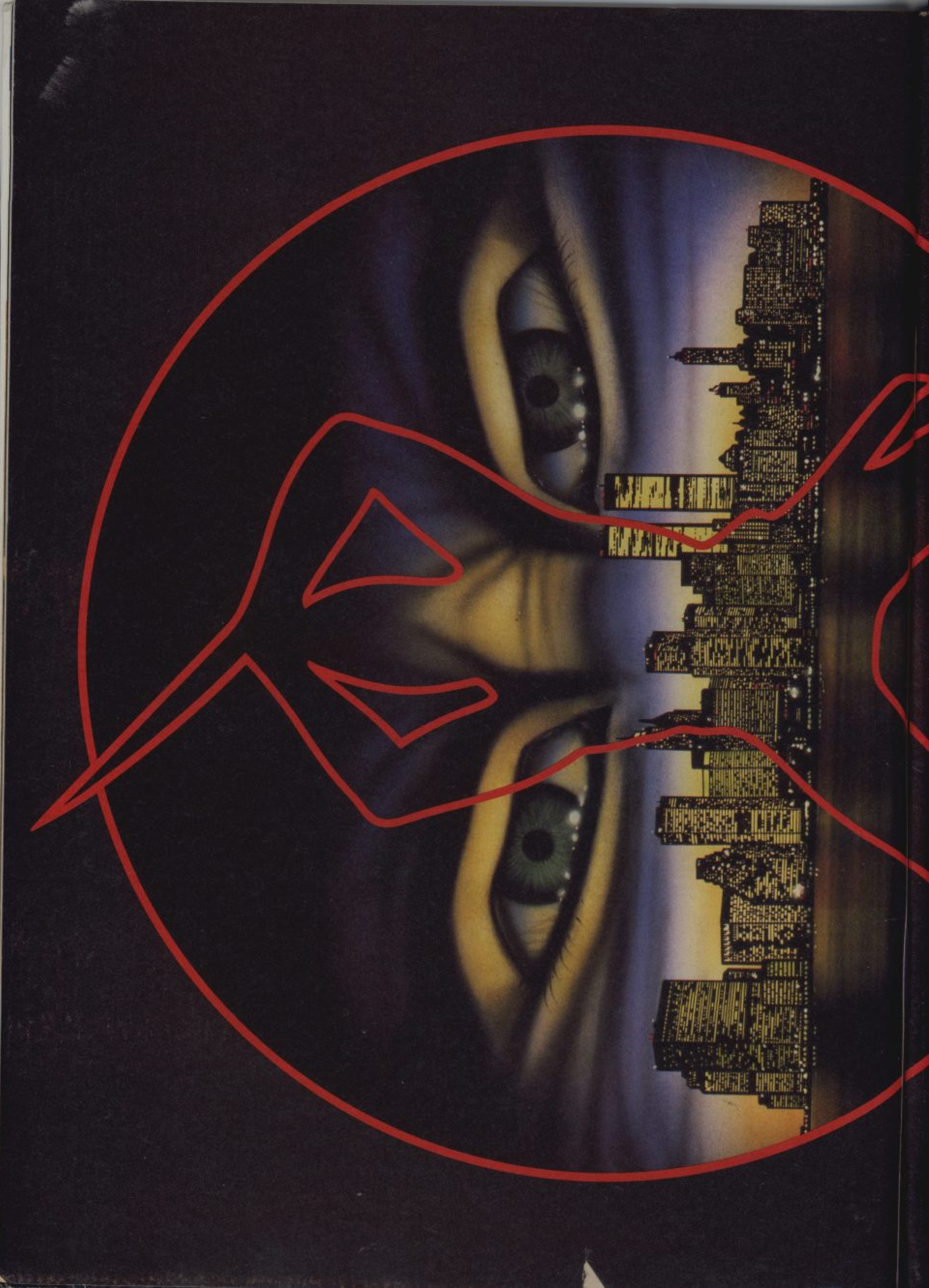
1	Virus – Firebird
2	Football Manager 2 – Addictive
3	Outrun – Sega/US Gold
4	Gauntlet 2 – US Gold
5	Empire strikes Back – Domark
6	Space Harrier – Elite
7	Alien Syndrome – ACE
8	Dungeon Master – Mirrorsoft
9	Carrier Command – Rainbird
10	Sidewinder – Mastertronic

Virus sticks in the top slot, while Sidewinder re-enters at the bottom and Elite and Ace score new entries with Space Harrier and Alien Syndrome.

AMIGA TOP FIVE

1	Interceptor – Electronic Arts
2	Football Manager 2 – Addictive
3	Corruption – Rainbird
4	Black Lamp – Firebird
5	Ikari Warriors – Elite

Black Lamp and Footie Two re-enter, and Rainbird's Corruption leaps in at number 3, while the excellent Interceptor retains the top spot.





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Knightmare's Back

Remember the first series of Knightmare, the award winning D & D style adventure game that brightened up Children's ITV last winter? Five million of you do. Enough to earn it a second series, because as eagle eyed Monday afternoon viewers will have spotted, it's back! Back! Back! Brilliant special effects aimed to "take exciting steps in what was previously the unknown", coupled with gameplay that will be more than familiar to the Wayne's of this world make it a real treat for all fantasy fans. To find out what they're raving about, why not tune in at 4.45pm next Monday, and watch out for a new sci-fi TV game to follow in it's footsteps.









English Arts

E.A.'s first British developed release, the arcade/strategy game *Fusion*, is released in October. The player must collect the scattered components of some mega-bomb in order to destroy an alien planet. So much for interseller glasnost.

Lots of the de rigueur "rotating plasmo spheres", "nitro mice" (?) and so on to blast, and weapons to scoop up. Sounds just like a shoot 'em up to us. Price will be £24.95.





Stick It

You might well already own a Konix joystick – their Speed King has sold oodles and can be found hooked up to everything from IBMs to Nintendo consoles. Now they're going for a virtual stranglehold on the market with two new products – the Predator 9 (about £13) and the subtly named Megablaster (£8ish). The larger Predator operates by micro-switches rather than more traditional methods, but both can be used with all the major systems covered by this magazine.





Top Nintendo

Nintendo remain confident of supplying the UK with game packs and Entertainment Systems for the Christmas market despite a world wide shortage of chips.

Recent game packs reviewed in C + VG including Punch Out, Zelda Legend of Link, and Rad Racer will all be available from major branches of Boots by the end of September.

The Punch Out game carries an endorsement by world champ – Mike Tyson who you will see on the TV quite soon in a series on Nintendo advertisements. The latest info on Nintendo is in our Mean Machines column every month.

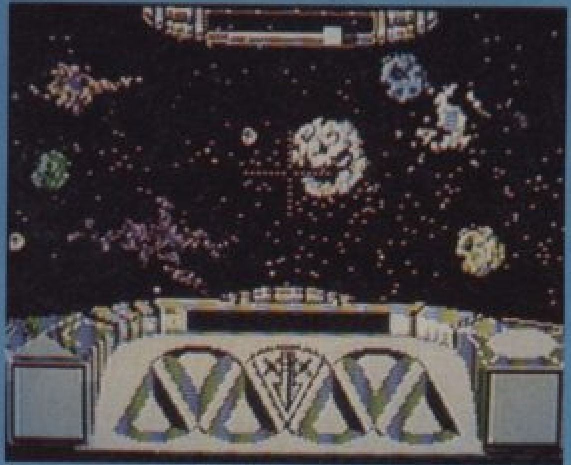




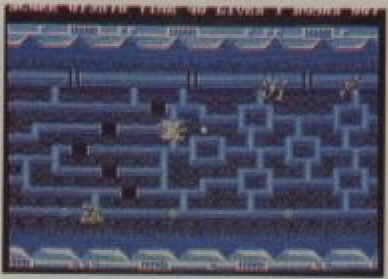


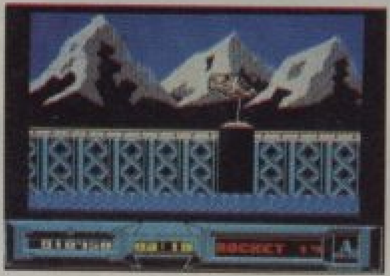
Jedi Completes "Star Wars" Trilogy

Hot on the heels of Empire Strikes Back comes Domark's last conversion of a Star Wars license, this time junking the quick vector graphics that have served well in the past in favour of solid sprites. Based in the main on the Ewok jungles portions of the movie, the first level has you play Princess Leia in the speederbikes chase, bumping off Stormtroopers and springing traps to help the cuddly little teddy bears. For part two the action switches between Chewbacca dodging rolling logs in a stolen Walker, and Lando flying the Falcon towards the Death star. With the shields blow, you can then go onto part three, and the destruction of the enemy space ship. Out in October on ST, Amiga, C64, Spectrum and Amstrad. The question everyone's asking is: "Where's Luke Skywalker . . .?



Into the Valley





Hewson's Rack-It budget label strikes back with two newies for the coming weeks. Battle Valley is a desert based shoot 'em up where your task is to capture a terrorist base (ho hum).

In Scorpion you pilot a super-tank taking out squidgy aliens. Still, at least they're cheap.

GERMAN BYTES

AN EXTRA SPECIAL SNEAKY PREVIEW OF SOME HOT NEW GAMES FROM THOSE "CRAZY" GERMAN BOYS.







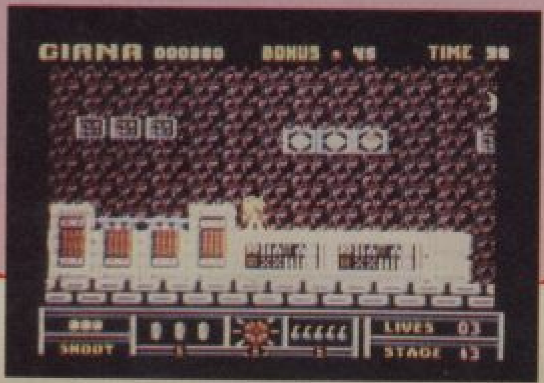
Some of the best looking 16 bit games are coming out of the fatherland these days, and over the next few months a whole passel of top notch product is going to be hitting the Bavarian streets. Fax has the low down on what's hot and what's not courtesy of new German correspondent Carsen Borgmeier (crazy name, crazy guy).
Best news of all for the C+VG Great Giana freakes (ie. all the office) is that the sisters' second adventure is almost ready. Rainbow Arts will publish "Giana Sisters in the Future World" for Amiga, ST and C64 probably at the end of September, with better graphics, extra weapons and more hidden surprises. Carsten assures us that it scrolls vertically, though we're not too sure about our ourselves.

Magik Bytes hasn't been slouching either. Their Tom and Jerry game for C64, ST, Amiga and Amstrad CPC should be out in Germany at the start of '89, featuring a two player option where Tom must chase the mouse, and Jerry can defend himself with all manner of household objects as in the cartoon. This is joined by North Sea Inferno in May, where your job is to make your way through a maze of piping to defuse an oil platform threatened by a terrorist bomb.





Window Wizard, the tale of a big city window cleaner hampered by dropped flower pots, opening panes and the like, is but one release from Hanover based Reline software. They also have a Strip poker game (yawn!), Oil Imperium which is a business strategy game, and Dyter 07, where you must capture tropical enemy islands with the use of robots and a helicopter. March sees the release of the impressive looking role playing adventure "Legend of Faerghail" which CB reckons may show Bard's Tale the way home.
No British release dates for any of these yet, but if you're that desperate you could always nip over the Channel for them. Certainly easier than getting your greasy little hands on a PC Engine . . .





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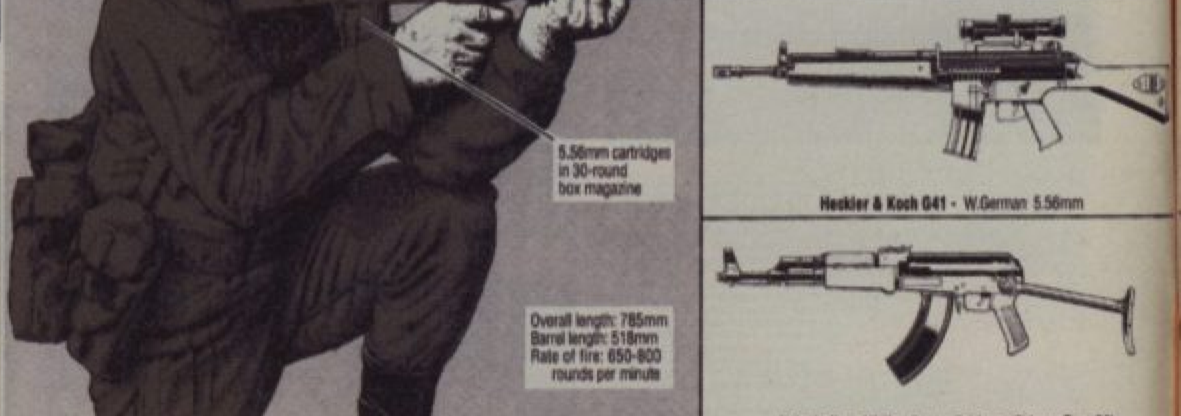
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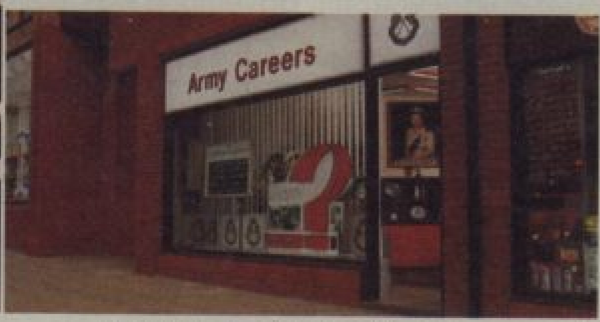
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THE PROFESSIONALS

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► MACHINES: C64, AMIGA, PC, ST.
► SUPPLIER: US GOLD.
► PRICE: C64 £14.99 (DISK)/AMIGA, PC, ST £24.99.
► VERSION TESTED: C64.
► REVIEWER: WAYNE.

Pool of Radiance is about to change the face of computer role playing as we know it.

We've all seen *The Bard's Tale* and many other so called role playing games, but *AD+D* is in a different league altogether.

For a start *AD+D* is the only computer game in existence at the moment that can claim to have been specifically designed as a tabletop role playing game. That was over ten years ago by the man who started roleplaying off, Gary Gygax.

Since its arrival on the market, tabletop *AD+D* has been expanded, refined and generally improved in many different areas. The computer adaptation of the game was only held back by the limitation of computer technology. The advent of the 16 bit computers has made *AD+D* possible.

TSR created the storyline to the adventure, whilst the SSI team, lead by Chuck Kroegal, developed the computer game.

Kroegel has flirted with computer role playing before helping develop *Shards Of Spring*, *Phantasie* and several other fantasy games.

Considering its background, it's surprising that the game so adheres strictly to the *AD+D* tabletop rules and mechanics. From the first glance of this product you know you are in for something special as the packaging is superb. The box has excellent artwork and immediately grabs your attention. Upon opening it, you are confronted by an awesome sight, which will chill the bones of even the most hardened role player. The first thing to hit you is the FOUR disks. OK, I know a couple of other games contain four disks, but how many of them are DOUBLE SIDED!! Yes that is eight sides (count 'em) of information packed disks, all waiting to be played.

Next up is the well written and interesting 28 page introductory booklet. This goes on to unravel some of the secrets relating to the game and generally explains the concepts behind it. It tells you how to create your party of six bold adventurers, which in reality is no easy task. Each team member is created individually and a degree of forethought is essential at all times as it is a somewhat long and arduous process.

For the novice, the character creation process could become quite complex. However the booklet guides you through and holds you in good stead. It explains that the four character classes available; Fighter, Cleric, Thief and Magic User. You have to allocate one of these classes to your character, as it represents their vocation in life. There is a fifth option however for non-human characters They can elect to become Multi character class, which allows them to become a mixture of the aforementioned classes available. However, in true tabletop fashion, the advantages are balanced with certain disadvantages. Their progression within the game system is slow, so they tend to die more regularly.

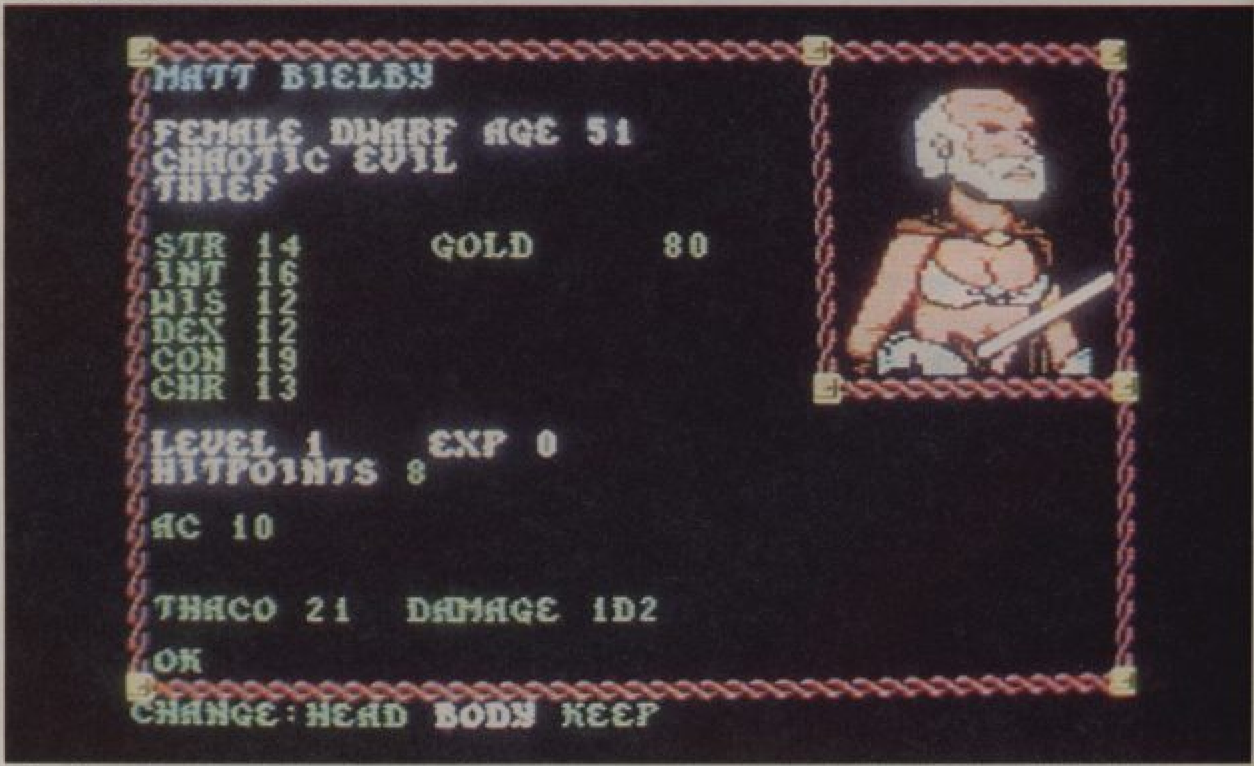
It then explains that each character has six abilities; Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, Constitution and Charisma. The computer randomly generates the ability scores that every adventurer has. Each ability score has an effect on the play of the character. The ability scores are based on a range from 3 (the lowest) to 18 (the highest). This goes back to the table top game, where players roll a varying amount of six sided dice to determine their characters abilities, and select the best three results. Each character has a *"Prime Requisite"* ability score, which means in layperson's terms, "the one special ability."

Next up is alignment, a source of controversy in the table top ranks for many years! Alignment is the philosophy a character lives by. You control the actions of your characters and the character's alignment can effect the way other people in the game view it.

The final stage is the design of your character. This impressed me no end, as there are so many options. You can start off by choosing which pose you would like your character to have. This also gives you a limited selection of weapons and shields. Next you allocate colours to your character's clothes, for various parts of the body.

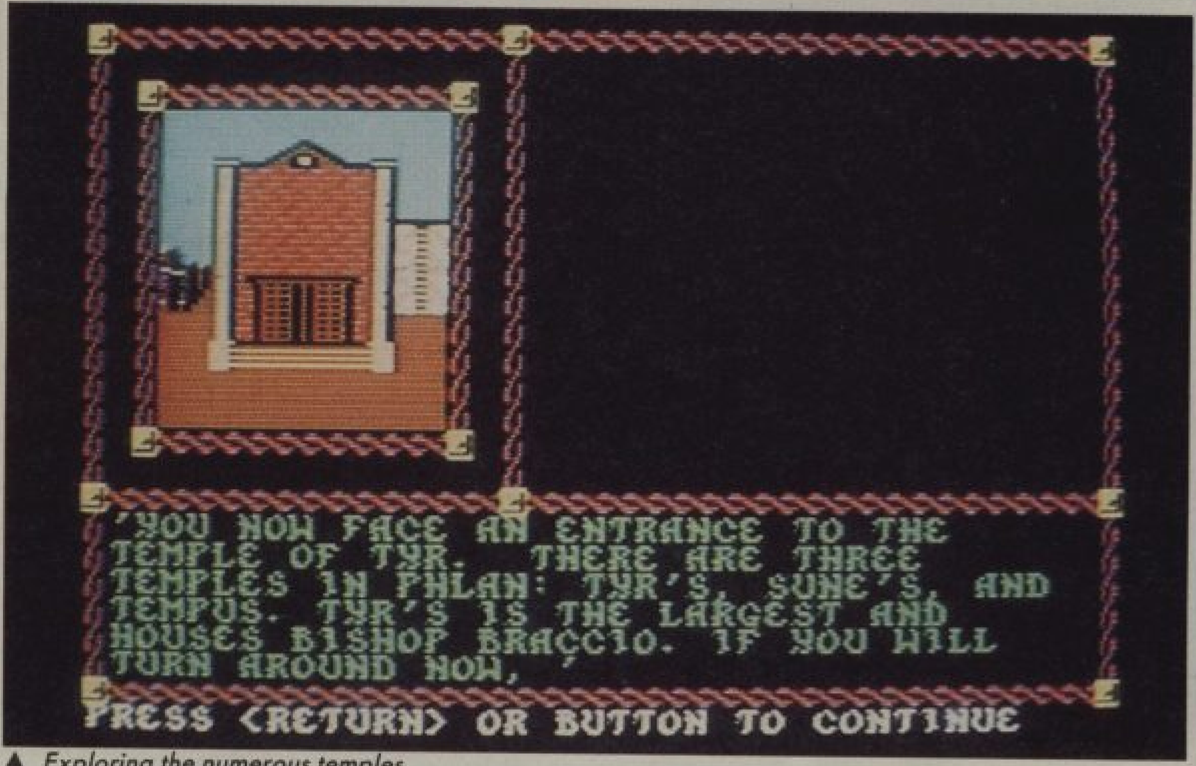
C+VG HIT!

POOL



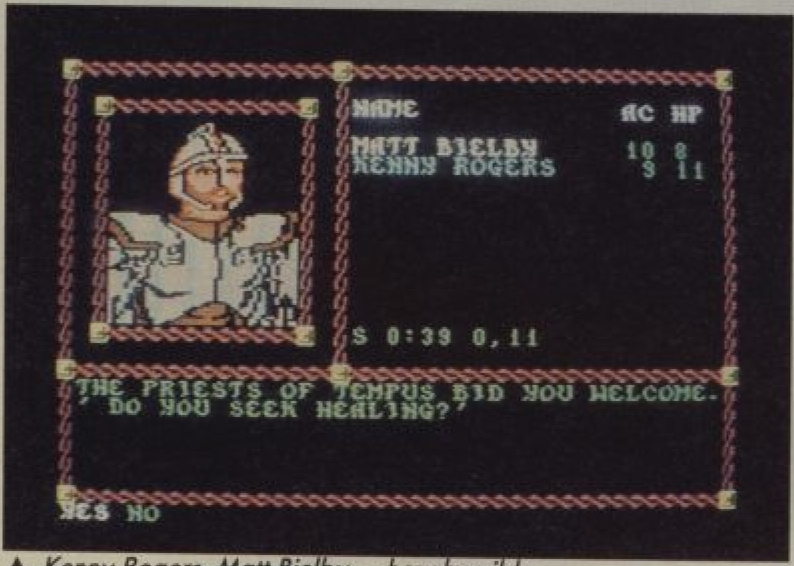
▲ *The real Matt Bielby is at last revealed!*

It then goes on to explain the concept of death, which will come swiftly if first aid and/or magical healing isn't applied to combat worn characters. If you are unlucky enough to lose a character, it may well be possible to resurrect them depending on two factors; their Constitution and manner of death. If the deceased has a low constitution, then you have a small chance of being brought back to the land of



▲ *Exploring the numerous temples.*

OF RADIANCE



▲ *Kenny Rogers, Matt Bielby — how horrible.*



▲ *Kenny 'n' Matt indulge in a little boating. Lovely.*

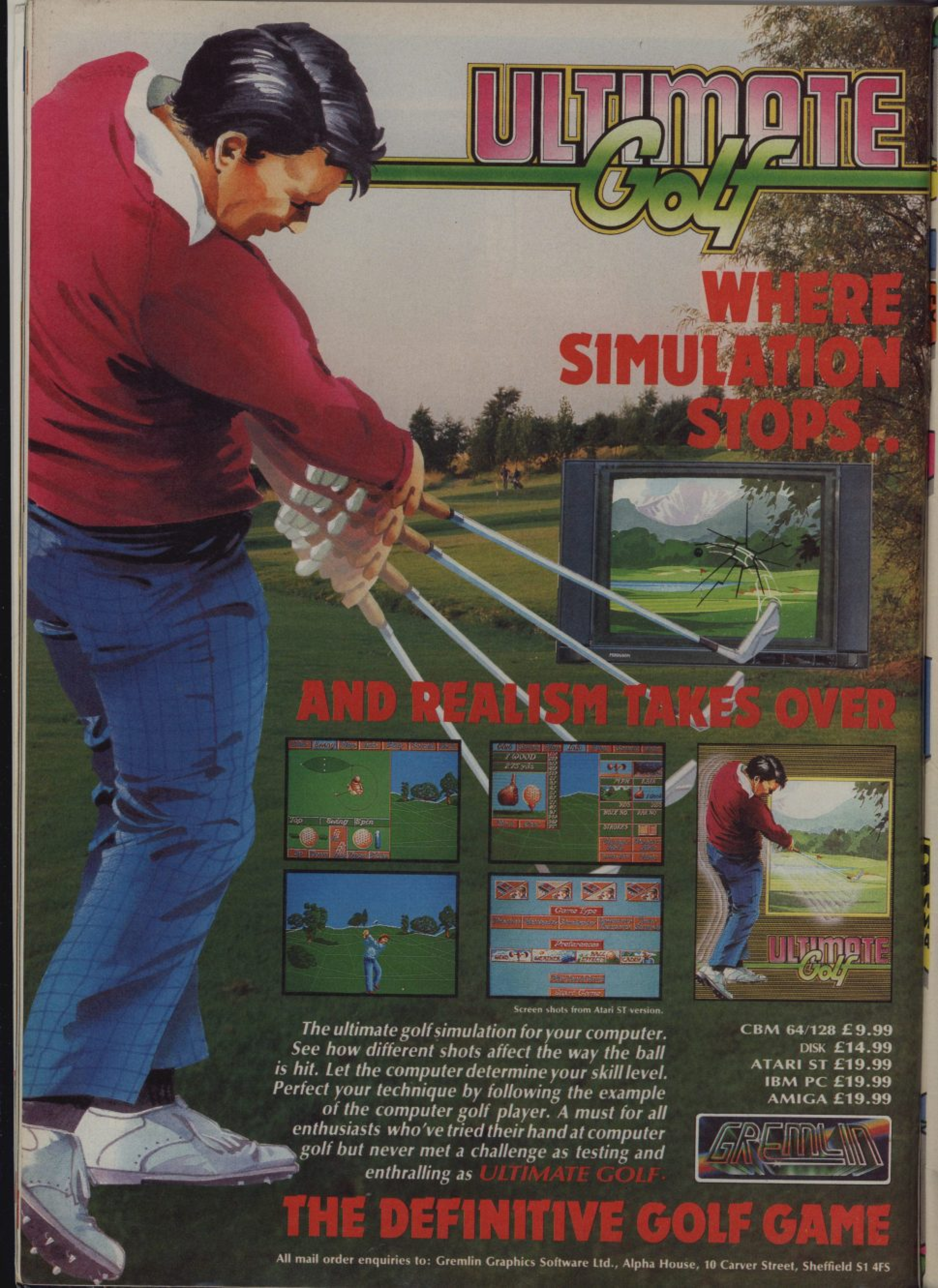
the living and if they died via a Dragon's flame or a disintegrate spell, they have no chance at all.

Combat allows for a wide range of both tactics and strategy to be applied as each character is moved on an individual basis. It can be as slow or as fast as you like, because of the quick option that allows the computer to take over the combat and run it rapidly.

Through combat and the accumulation of treasure you build up your experience points. When you have reached a certain level of experience, and have the specified amount of money, you can go to training school and enhance your abilities. This allows you to progress in levels, which makes your characters more hardy and proficent in their abilities.

You then move onto the *Adventurer's Journal*, which provides the background to "Pools". It is a 38 page booklet that includes fliers, maps, and information that your adventurers would know before beginning their quest. A thorough read of this is a must, as it provides some very important and essential information, that will be ignored at a player's peril.

So party created and background read, it is off to adventure in the land of Moonsea, where the game is based. And what an adventure it is!! You start off in the city of Phlan. Your mission, to bring Phlan back to its former glory. But how? Well, you could (and should) start by getting paly with the town council. The council will post messages on the wall of the city which represent


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Screen shots from Atari ST version.
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POOL OF RADIANCE

missions that the council would like you to do on their behalf. They can be anything from clearing an area of town of monsters, vermin etc, to finding magical tomes, many miles away. Of course the council will amply reward you . . . If you succeed. Another thing you can do is listen to gossip in taverns. This is a lucrative form of adventuring at best, and many an adventurer has been killed by investigating false tavern tales. However, it is also very profitable, if found to be true.

On the course of your adventure you can talk to almost everyone. You meet literally thousands of people and how they react depends on how you speak to them. If you agree to *parlay* with them, you have five choices of



▲ *Shades of Gauntlet in this brilliant RPG.*



▲ *Kenny 'n' Matt in . . . (just watch it, captions writer! Matt).*

conversational tone, being: Haughty, Sly, Meek, Nice and Abusive. Some of the Non Player Characters (NPCs; people controlled by the computer), will even offer to join you in your quest. You can allow up to two NPCs to join you and it may seem like a good thing at the time to swell your ranks by two. However, choose wisely. Every person in this game is individual. Certain people who wish you ill will try tc join you. They can be traitors who will spy on you, reporting secret information to your enemies and they may even turn on you in battle. Furthermore treat NPCs badly and they may desert you, even in the midst of a pitched battle!

The game is very easy to get on with once adventuring, and you soon get on with the menus that confront you. I must say however that I found them all a bit too joystick responsive. I found myself wizzing through the various options at frightening speeds and sometimes I would input the wrong order, much to my party's cost.

The graphics are very good for an 8 bit machine. Kroegel has certaintly tried to go for maximum effect here, although at times they could be considered lurid. The game also plays quickly and there is a minimal amount of disk changing for such a large game. This came as a welcome surprise and once more shows Krogel's versatility.

The roleplaying element is just what can be expected from TSR – excellent. There is also an overall friendly attitude.

There are a lot of nice little touches as well. The Translation Wheel is beneficial and not a hinderance, the NPC's deliver some very nice lines of conversation, and cameo performances, and the quick start option plus starting off hints were appreciated.

Overall *Pools* is a game which no role player or adventurer should be without and people new to role playing should seriously consider buying as an introductory guide.



▲ *Here's Rolf, your grinning chum.*

► SOUND	7
► PLAYABILITY	8
► VALUE	9
► ROLEPLAYING	9
► GRAPHICS	9

UPDATE . . .

So far only available on Commodore disk – but a tape version is planned. PC, Amiga, and ST versions will follow in that order over the next few months. No Speccy version planned as yet though – USG/TSR plan further releases.

AD&D Competition





The computer games hobby can claim to have thrown up a fair few talented artists in its brief history.

Illustrations for boxes, advertisements and the graphics for games themselves have gasps of admiration from games players.

But all of the best computer games art is as nothing when you stand it beside some of the very best work generated by the artists working in the world of fantasy books, magazines and board games.

Names like Tim White, Larry Elmore, Jeff Easley, Keith Parkinson and Chris Achilleos have become stars in their own right and the faithful will pay huge sums to own one of their originals.

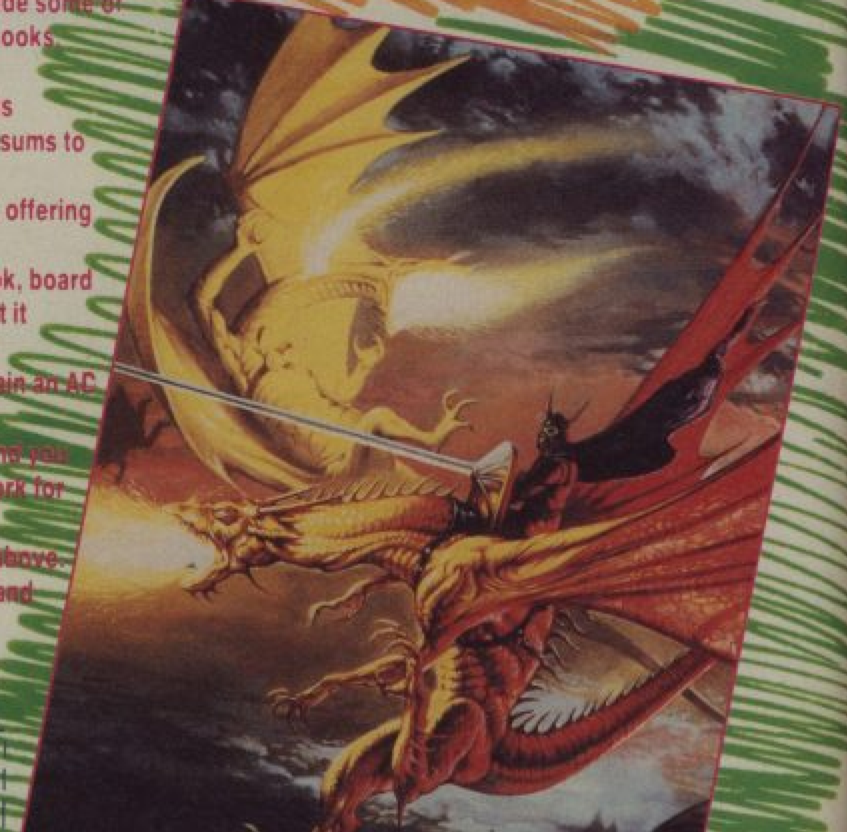
C + VG is launching a search to find the new stars of fantasy art and we are offering ten super prizes to aid the quest.

We want you to draw us any scene you can dream up from any fantasy book, board game, or even your own idea. As long as it can loosely be labelled fantasy art it qualifies.

The ten best illustrations will receive an AD & D Super Prize. This will contain an AD & D board game, computer game, T shirt, two books and poster.

The very best fantasy illustration will be published as a poster for C + VG and you will be paid by C + VG for the use of your illustration just like the pros who work for us regularly.

To give you some ideas have a look at the work of some of the top names above. Think you can do better? Don't forget to cut out and fill in the coupon below and send it off with your entry. The competition closes on October 31st and the winners will be announced in our January issue.



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Age...

Computer.......................................



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Screen shots from various formats.

Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House,

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Reviews

HEROES O

► MACHINES: C64, ST, AMIGA, IBM PC, SPECTRUM, AMSTRAD.
► SUPPLIER: US GOLD (SSI).
► PRICE: C64/SPEC/AMS £9.99 CASS, C64/SPEC/AMS £14.99 DISK, ST/AMIGA/IBM £24.99.
► VERSION TESTED: ST.
► REVIEWER: TONY DILLON.

If you are a well cool FRPer who is more than worth his salt, skip this paragraph. If you are a computer gamer who is wise on what's going down at the moment, also skip this.

Once upon a time, not so long ago (around 10 years, actually) a couple of guys headed by Gary Gygax put their heads together to try and create the ultimate game. What they came up with was the first (and to my mind, still the best) Fantasy Role Playing game, the classic *Dungeons and Dragons*.

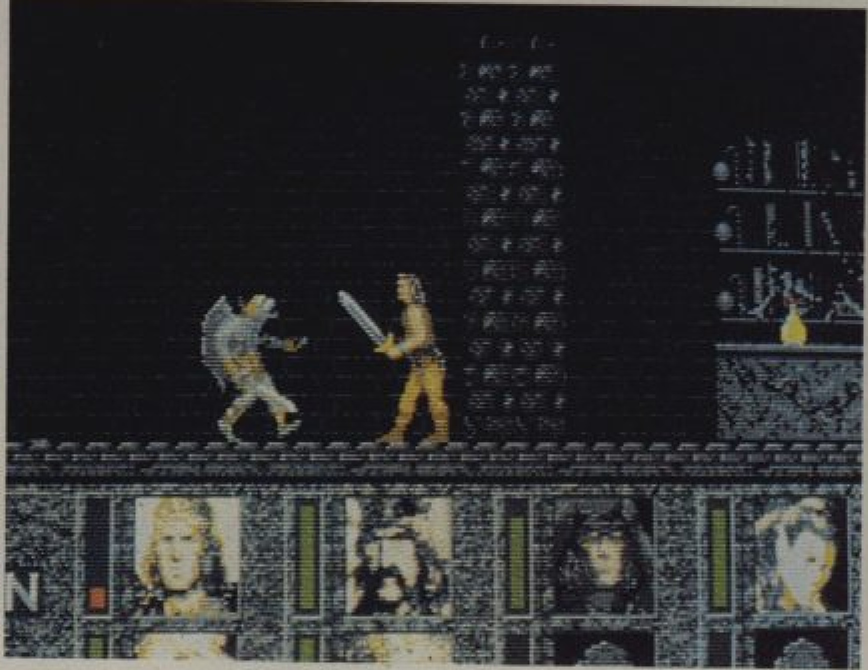
So successful was this venture that they expanded the single basic set of rules and the few meagre 'ready-made' adventure modules to a huge 5-set game. And it's still growing. On top of that, they created *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons*, for those who want a little more detail in their make-believe worlds.

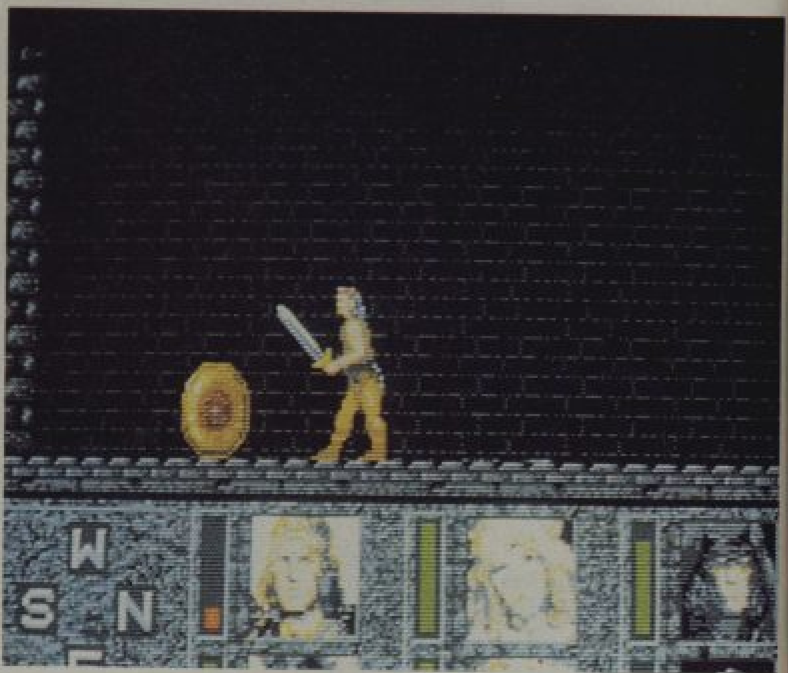
There have been many imitations, but it's finally here. The official AD&D computer product. *Heroes of the Lance* follows the antics of a band of adventurers in search of the Discs of Mishakal, which are guarded by Khisanth, a huge black dragon, deep in the ruins of the town of Xak Tsaroth. The reason this band of seven plucky lads and one busty, blonde, bouncy bimbette (I should write for The Sun) have to get these circles of sanctuary is to stop the advancement of the Queen of Darkness into the land of Krynn (the last 'n' is silent, by the way), the mystical land first brought to light in the *Dragonlance* chronicles. For those of you who don't know, the *Dragonlance* chronicles are the diary of a band of FRPers who decided to let the world know what they got up to behind closed doors. Expect 'Scrabble: The Novel' next month.

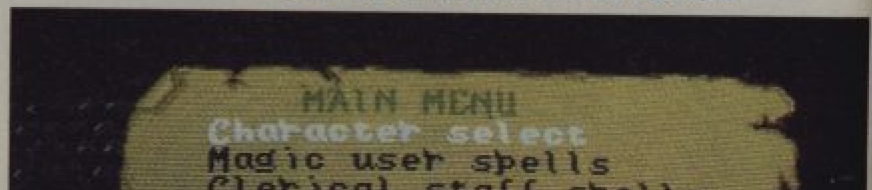
Unlike the other AD&D release this month, *HOTL* gives you your characters beforehand, and quite an experienced lot they are too. You've got (in order of size) Tanis the Elf. A born fighter due to his high Strength and Dexterity, a character well worth having 'up front'. Caramon Majere. A seasoned fighter, he lives for battle, and usually wins due to his almost freakish strength. Spends his time looking after his twin brother Raistlin. Raistlin. Weak, though incredibly clever,



She's sexy but well 'ard




Wack 'em on the head . . . nick the shield

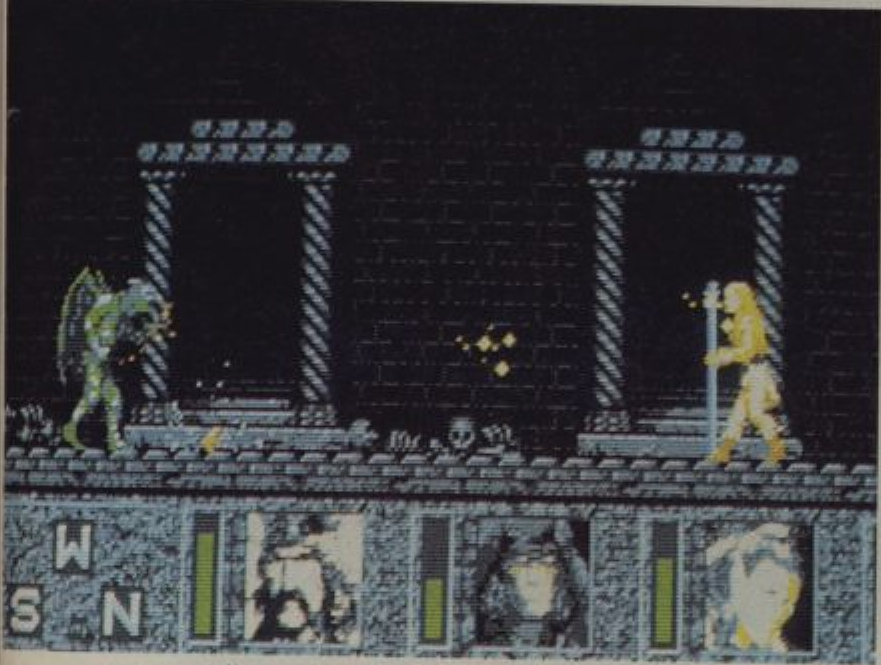


▲ If you wanna role play you have to make a choice.

F THE LANCE



... *Ee's a tough nut too.*



... *now you're cookin.*


▲ *The enchanted waterfall.*

the obvious profession for this puny excuse of a boy was Magic. Probably the most inexpendable of the group. Sturm Brightblade. Bearing an almost unbelievable resemblance to Derek Smalls from Spinal Tap, he was graced with Knighthood at a young age. Riverwind. Raised as a Navajo, he was almost stoned for lying to his elders. He told them a magic staff he found was magic. When asked to prove it, he couldn't. Luckily everyone saw the funny side. Tasslehoff Burrfoot. Flint Fireforge. A dwarf with a good axe throwing arm. Extremely deadly, despite his diminutive size. The girlie of the party, and the only one with a healing capability, so don't let her get killed.

Rather than have this as a true, straight RPG, USG has used the system not unlike the Windowmation system used in the Magic Knight games, *Spellbound, Knight Tyme* and *Stormbringer*. Pressing space brings up a menu with which you can manipulate all the objects and people in the game. For example, you can change the marching order by swapping the order of the photographs at the bottom of the screen. Why bother with that? Just like the *Bard's Tale* series, only the first four people can be involved in any combat of any description. The other four just sit on their bottoms waiting to be called to the foray. Also from this menu, you can call up selection screens for magic spells, to call up visual representations on a characters stats and much more.

One thing I haven't told you yet, even though you've probably worked it out from the screenshots on this page, is that this game is an arcade adventure, not an RPG. "Hold on a minute," "isn't AD&D an RPG? "Yes," I reply with a mischevious Irish twinkle in my eyes," but as US Gold have made probably the best decision I've seen them make yet." They've released TWO AD&D games. The other one is a full RPG, and very good it is too.

Viewed akin to *Dun Darach,* your party is represented by a large, wonderfully animated (if a little slow) piccy of whoever is first in your marching order. This is the character you have full control over. The others are assumed to just be tagging along.

The graphics are fantastic. All the sprites are gorgeously detailed and amazingly animated, though the scrolling does tend to be a little jerky. The secret screens are amazing, too. "What secret screens," you may as well cry. When you enter various rooms around the ruins, you are presented with a large, animated picture of exactly what you can see. I could only find one, which contained a beautiful underground river. With a bit of luck there'll be a screenshot somewhere else on this page.

You get all this, plus a very big playing area, some very attractive backdrops, a wide variety of spells, plus the 'feel' of the original game. How have they done it. With one snag. There are three disks, so expect a lot of disk swapping, though the disc access is fast enough not to be frustrating. *HOTL* is the best ST game I've ever played, even beating my old favourite, *Captain Blood*. Any game that can keep me up to 4 o'clock in the morning has to be worth checking out.

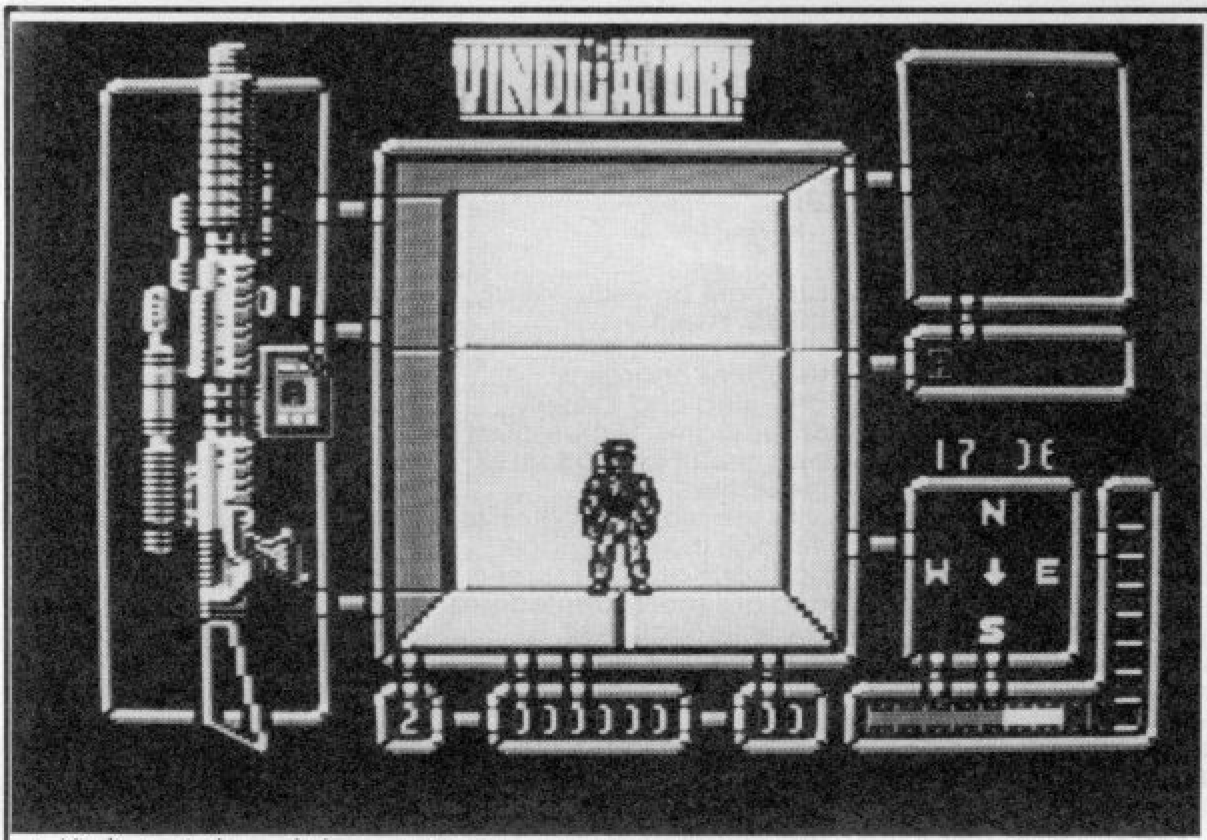
Wouldn't you agree?

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	7
► PLAYABLITY	8
► VALUE	8
► OVERALL	8

UPDATE . . .

The ST version is the first version to hit the shops – though versions for all systems will be launched throughout the Autumn. Given that the ST version has three disks – expect some kind of multi load system for Spectrum and Amstrad.

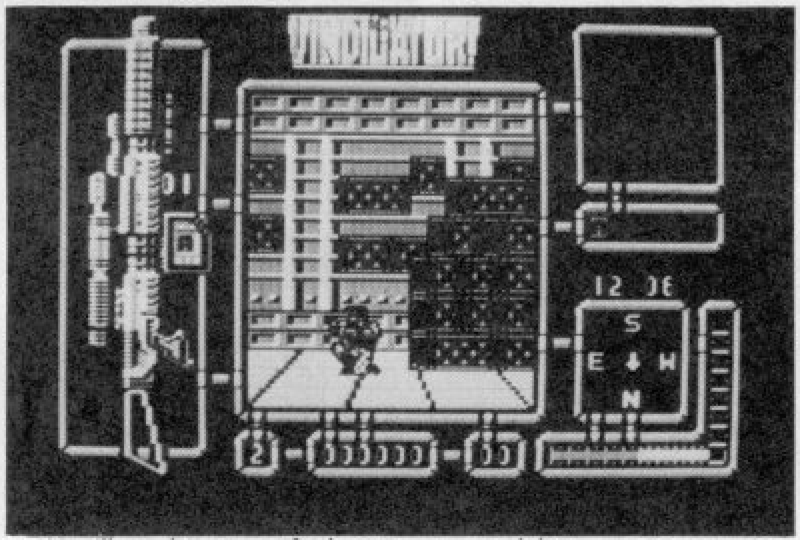
C+VG HIT!



▲ *Vindicator is three whole games in one.*

VINDICATOR

► **MACHINES: AMSTRAD CPC/SPECTRUM/CBM 64.**
► **SUPPLIER: IMAGINE.**
► **PRICES: AMSTRAD £8.95/£11.95 DISK/SPECTRUM £7.95/£10.95 DISK/CBM 64 £8.95/£11.95 DISK.**
► **VERSION TESTED: AMSTRAD CPC.**
► **REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.**



▲ *You'll need a map to find your way round this game.*

He's tough. He's mean. He's got a tiny little head and arms as thick as your torso. He's the Vindicator, and he's the hero of the latest Imagine romp, in which, guess what, you're the only man alive who can save the Earth from the invading alien hordes, blah blah blah . . .

This is a very tenuous follow-up to **Green Beret** – in fact the words **Green Beret 2** don't even appear on the box artwork, and the chap is kitted out in cool shades and a big gun rather than a floppy green hat.

It's a three-part game consisting of a 3-D maze followed by a vertically-scrolling shoot-em-up and finally a platforms-and-shooting gig. Like all maze games, the first half gets pretty tedious unless you're prepared to get out the Crayolas and make a map. It looks nice, though; comouflage-drab corridors, sliding doors, piles of crates and equipment, and the inevitable slimy aliens. As you make your way through the maze, investigating each room in turn, you must shoot it out with them, ducking under their fire and melting them into slimy puddles with your energy gun. The aliens carry ammunition, lift passes and computer code-cards, all of which you will need to complete the maze. When you find a computer room, you must "log on" using the appropriate card. There's an inventory display on the top right, which you flip through to select the correct card, and different types of ammunition. You also have to keep your eye on your oxygen level. The aliens breathe some sort of poisonous muck, so unless you keep finding supplies of oxy-gum you'll be really choked – literally. The best idea is to make a note of the locations where you find gum, and return to pick it up when your oxymeter runs low.

The aliens are very nicely designed, but don't present much of the challenge. The main brain-strain of the first section involves making your way through the maze and finding the passwords which will allow you into the elevators to the other levels.

Level two is much better for arcade fans; a fast-moving vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up similar in style to *Flying Shark.* It consists of two phases; in the first, you have a plane armed with missiles and bombs, with which you must clear away as many as possible of the enemy tanks, planes, helicopters and gun emplacements. If you survive this phase, you get to drive through the remaining defences in a jeep armed with grenades. At the end of this section is the giant lobster featured on the cover artwork, and he's a devil to knock off.

Phase three is very much in the style of *Trantor* or *Impossible Mission;* you move along corridors looking for lifts which will take you deeper and deeper into the complex. Hopping, flying and slithering aliens assault you from all sides, but at least you don't have to worry about ammunition – it's unlimited in this section. Finding operating switches to activate lifts allows you to move nearer and nearer to your final encounter with the horrific Gog.

The Vindicator is really three games in one, and unlike many efforts of this kind each game is of excellent quality and has plenty of original quirks. You might end up cursing it for taking up so much of your time, but you'll never regret buying it.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	7
► PLAYABILITY	9
► VALUE	9
► OVERALL	8

UPDATE . . .

The Commodore 64 version is due out very shortly, with a Spectrum version in a few weeks. Despite the mention on the current advert, there are no plans for an Atari ST version, or for that matter an Amiga conversion. Pity.

Reviews

ARMA

► MACHINE: C64.
► SUPPLIER: THALAMUS.
► PRICE: £9.99.
► VERSION TESTED: C64.
► REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.

Thalamus has already hit the headlines with two horizontally scrolling shoot 'em ups, *Sanxion* and *Delta*, and are set to repeat that success with their third, *Armalyte*. And how!

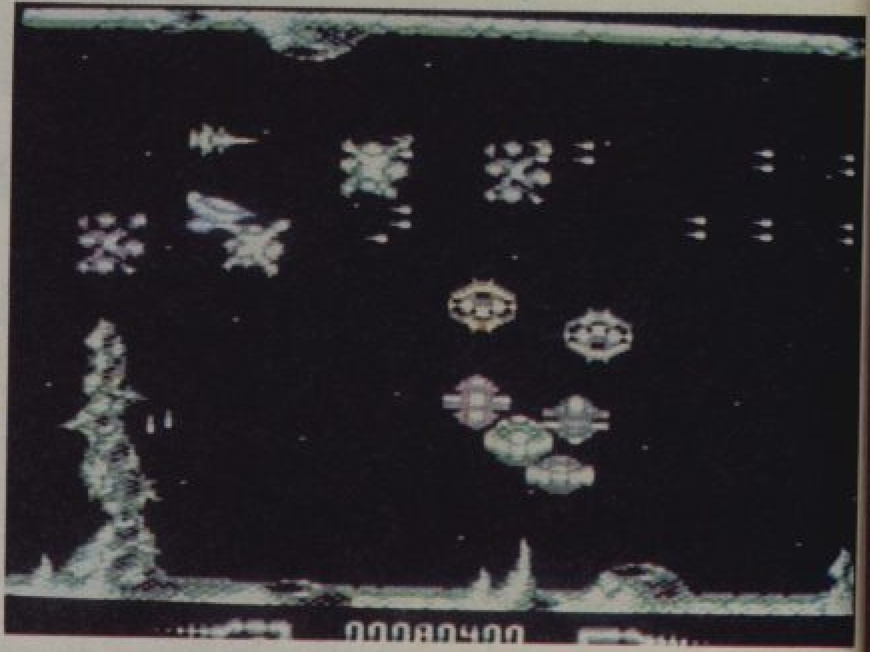
The game has been programmed in Exeter by newcomers Cyberdyne Systems, who've taken it upon themselves to prove that it's possible to produce an arcade-quality game on the C64. And they have. If feelings of scepticism are creeping in, bear with me and I'll explain.

Armalyte is a traditional horizontal scroller in the respect that you have to travel from left to right across a series of alien landscapes, blasting all and sundry. At the end of each level is a giant guardian who is disposed of before the next level is tackled. There are seven levels in all; each one is loaded separately and boasts a full 32K of graphics data. What makes *Armalyte* so very special is its technical excellence and finesse; it takes Commodore gaming to heights previously undreamed of . . .

At the start of a game, one or two players are selected. In the one-player mode the ship is equipped with a remote drone which floats in front of the craft giving extra firepower. In two-player both players battle simultaneously in *Salamander* fashion, although unlike the arcade game, both players have the same firepower. With that selected, the game begins.

Each ship starts out with two double-shot firepower and a complement of three superweapons, chosen from keyboard and activated with a long press of the fire button. The first gives a massive aerial burst, which practically fills the screen with laser fire. Second is laser fire which passes through scenery to destroy craft or installations that are otherwise impossible to hit, and the third is similar to the first, but releases fewer, but more powerful laser bursts. When a superweapon is fired, the weapons charge is depleted and it slowly regenerates, represented by a bar at the bottom of the screen.

As the player progresses through the landscape, pods drift onto the screen and are shot repeatedly to cycle through their contents. The first item gives an extra double-shot (up to six double shots), and the second and third give rearward and vertical firepower respectively. Fourth is tri-lasers (a pretty devastating addition to six double-shots) and fifth is conserve and converge protects against this reversal process. Sixth and seventh are generators and batteries, which are collected to speed up recharge time. A complete set of four batteries and







ALYTE

C+VG HIT!

generators gives a very quick recharge time, so you can use the superweapon almost repeatedly to much devastation (and satisfaction). If a pod is collected without being shot, the ship becomes invincible for five seconds.

The first level is set in a mechanical city, where metallic constructions, electric forcefields and batteries of laser emplacements await to destroy the player. Swarms of aliens infest the cityscape, and collecting extra weapons is essential to ensure survival. Halfway through the first level a mini-mothership attacks, and is disposed of to proceed through the rest of the city to where a giant guardian awaits. This is unlike anything I've ever seen on the Commodore; it's half a screen high and spins around the screen at an awesome velocity.

Next comes the ruins, consisting of broken pillars and monuments, complete with bomb-spitting gargoyles and even more aliens. The third level is my favourite and comprises of backgrounds inspired by Hans Rudi-Geiger's Necromomicon. The graphics are absolutely stunning, and I'd even be so bold to say that it knocks spots off the second level of the *Vulcan Venture* arcade game!

Later levels include a space section, complete with a myriad of swirling aliens, and a fabulous mountain level.

Armalyte's beauty isn't just skin deep – it's also the most playable shoot 'em up I've encountered. The gameplay is incredibly hectic, with an almost unfeasible amount of aliens swirling and whirling around the screen. Once again new ground is broken with up to 20 of your bullets and 20 different alien ships on-screen at the same time – and no glitches whatsoever!

The difficulty level is extremely well balanced and allows you to get a little further into the game, and consequently you find yourself glued in front of the monitor as you repeatedly play just to see whether you can get to the next level; addiction isn't the word for it – *Armalyte* almost requires a government health warning!

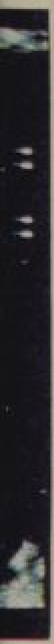
I seem to have exhausted all the superlatives in this review, but believe me; *Armalyte* will knock your socks off! It's simply the absolute pinnacle of Commodore gaming at present, and sets news standards that many will find nigh on impossible to match.

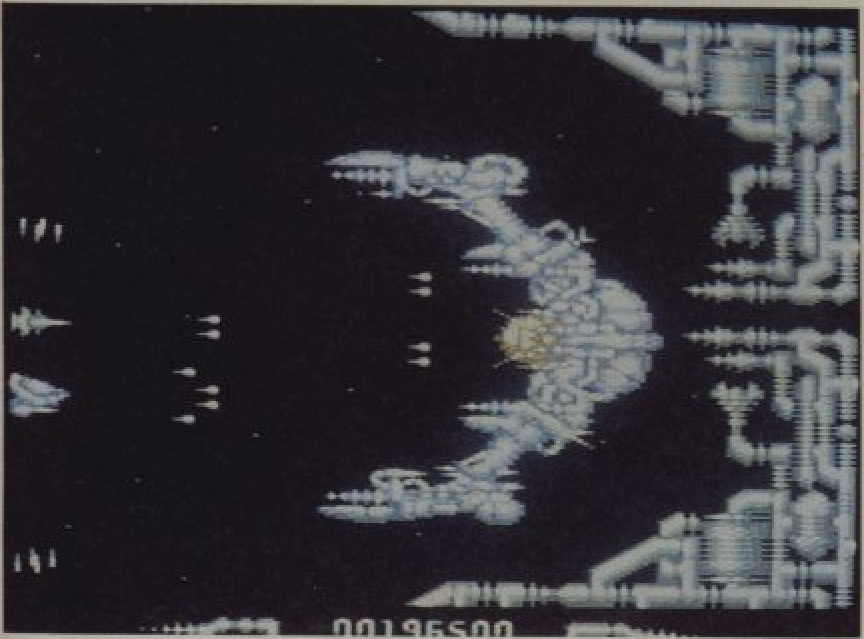
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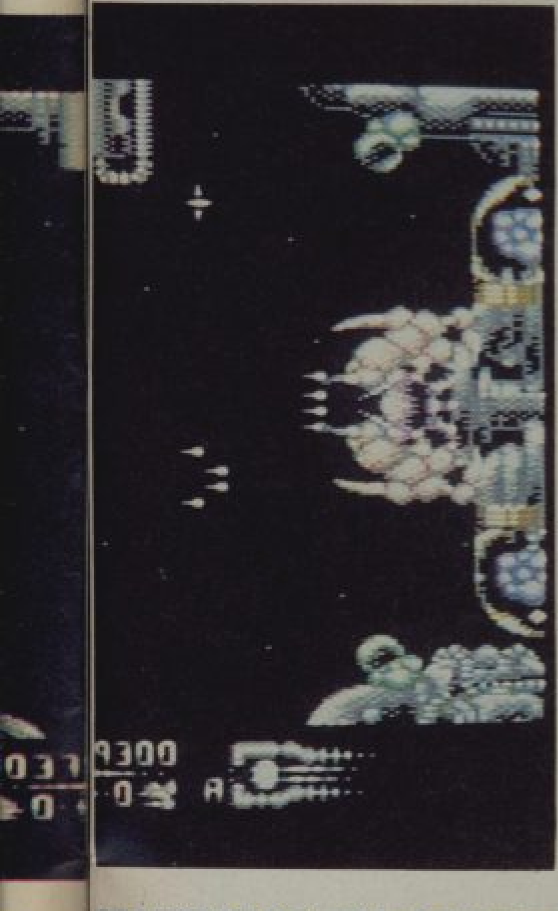
► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	9
► OVERALL	9

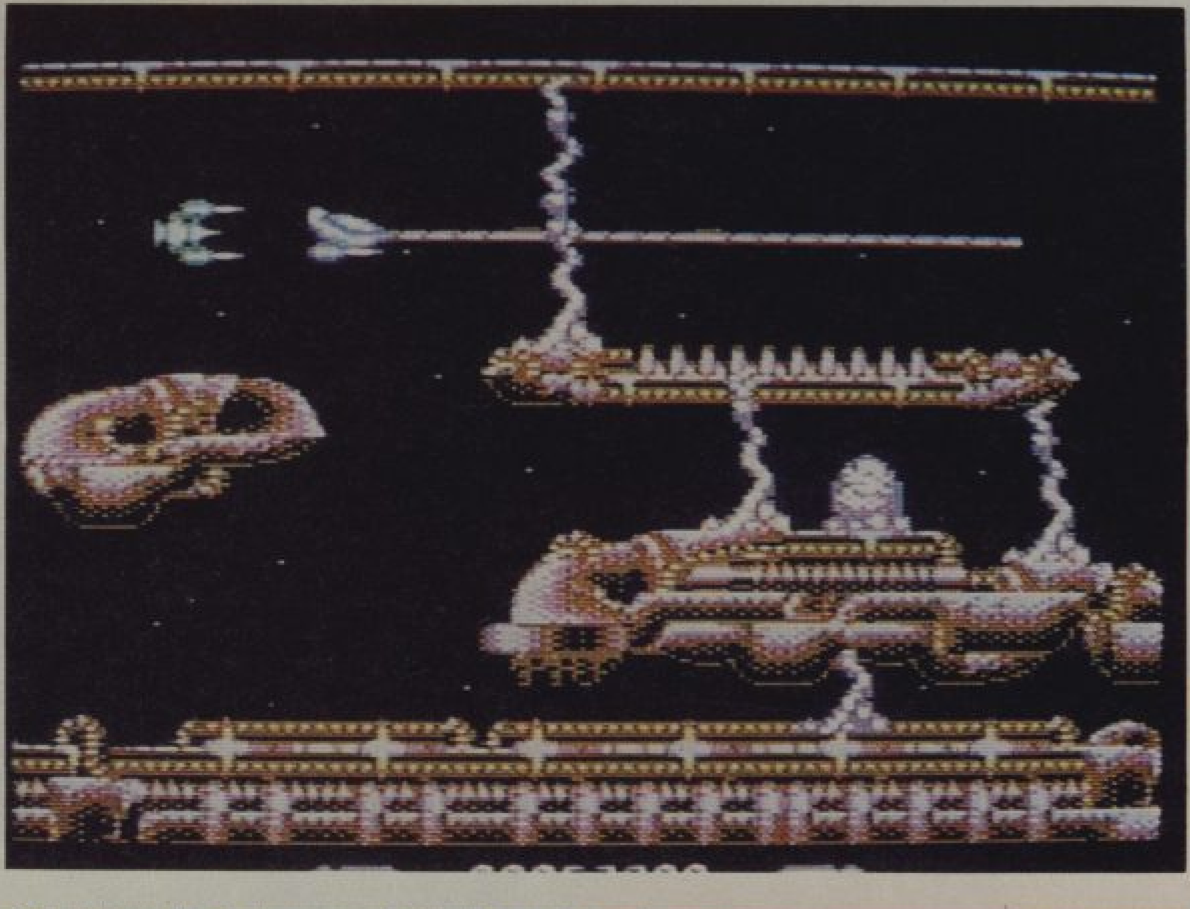
UPDATE . . .

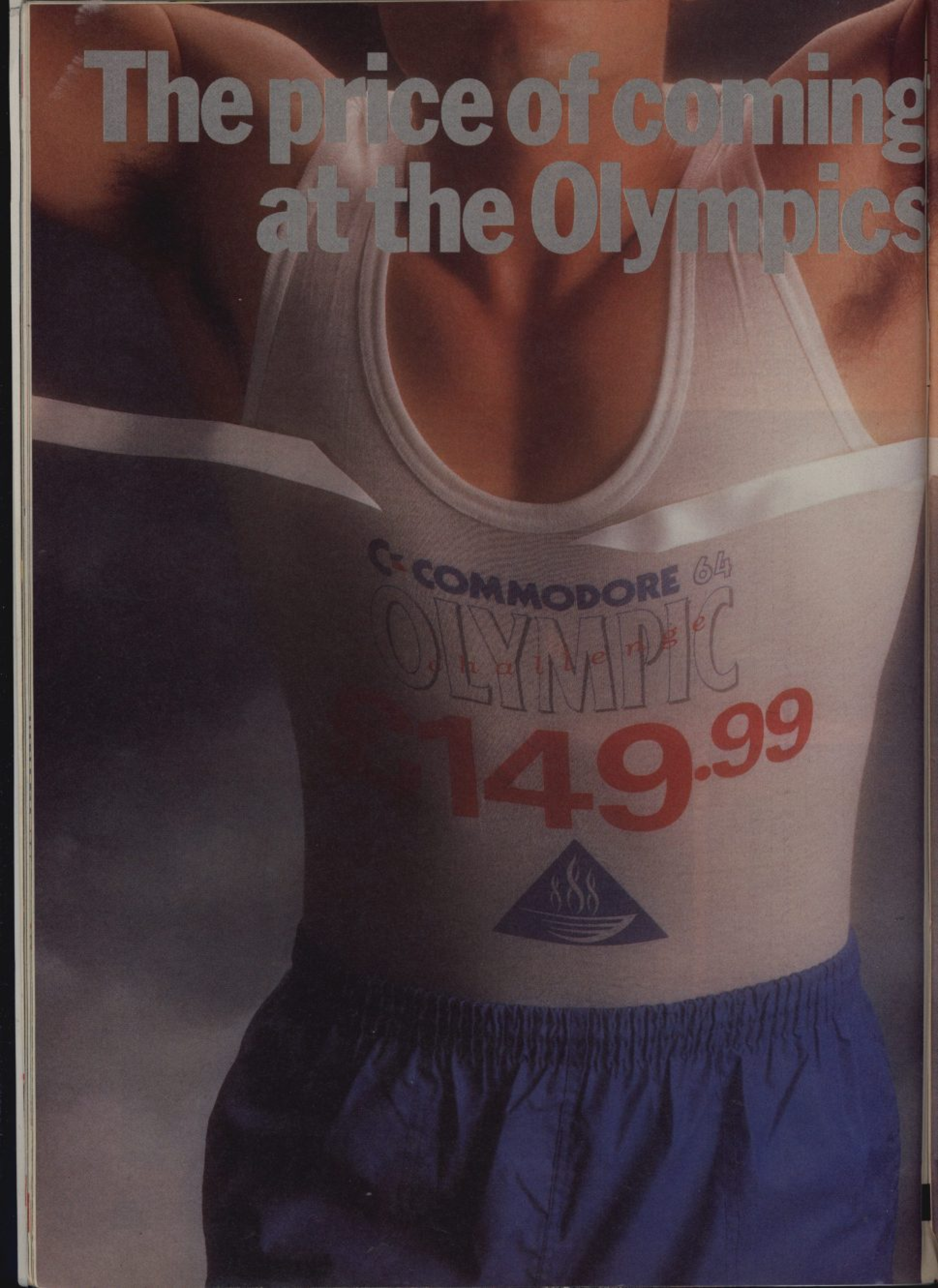
Thalamus has said that work is already underway on Atari ST and Amiga versions, which will retain all the playability of the 64 version but sport new features and better graphics. Sounds like they're games to look out for!










The price of coming
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COMMODORE 64
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challenge
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ROCKET

Reviews

► **MACHINES: ATARI ST, AMIGA.**
► **SUPPLIER: MIRRORSOFT.**
► **PRICES: £29.99.**
► **VERSION TESTED: AMIGA.**
► **REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.**

You won't be old enough to remember the cinema B-movie serials like *King of the Rocket Men* and *Radar Men from th Moon* which inspired *Rocket Ranger*. Fortunately, great serials like these, *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers*, are being revived on Saturday morning TV, so now you can see what you missed in the 30s! *Rocket Ranger* is the latest, and easily the best, Cinemaware game from Mirrorsoft. Like all the Cinemaware range, it features state-of-the-art graphics, sophisticated music and sound effects, and snazzy packaging. This time they've remembered to put a game in too!

The big problem with early Cinemaware titles like *Defender of the Crown* was that while the graphics were stunning, there was very little gameplay, so you could see everything in an hour and never want to play it again. *Rocket Ranger* doesn't have that problem at all; it's a complex blend of arcade and strategy sequences guaranteed to keep you playing for ages.

Using clever digitised photo-montages of maps, historical photos, and even a little animated Hitler, the prologue sequence explains the background to the game. As government scientist Cody, you are chosen by resistance fighters from a future world dominated by the super-science of the victorious Nazis, to receive the technological gifts which can help you to change history. From the moment when the time-transferred weapons materialise in front of your eyes, you are Rocket Ranger! The short novella enclosed expains the capabilities of your weapons, but there's an element of trial and error in working out how to use them.



▲ *Anyone remember the classic film "Destination Moon"?*

One of the most entertaining aspects of *Rocket Ranger* is the way in which the 30s serial has been lovingly recreated without a hint of parody. The pseudo-futuristic designs of the costumes, rocket ships and other pieces of technology; the helpless heroine constantly getting into dangerous scrapes; the potty professor, the evil sadistic baddies and the cliff-hanging perils are all there. It may not be as up-to-date as your Star Wars or your Terminators, but it has a charm all of its own.

Each new episode is introduced by cinema-style captions and stirring martial music, and most game choices are made by selecting an option from a small menu.

The real plot begins when top scientist Professor Barnstorff and his gorgeous pouting daughter Jane are kidnapped by a Nazi airship. The main strategy section of the game is controlled of five spies in twenty-five countries, in



▲ *Adolf struts his funky "thang".*

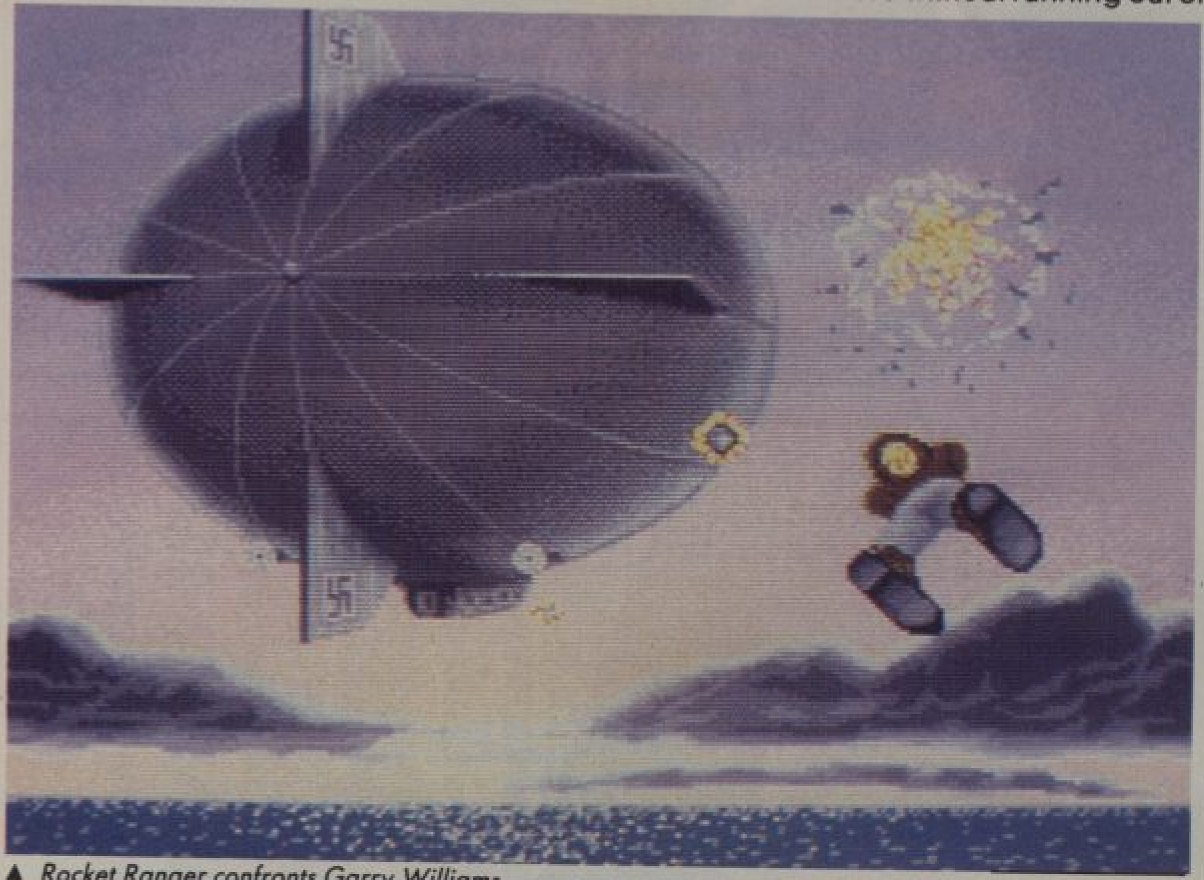
your attempt to thwart the Nazis. By using the menu system to issue orders, change priorities and monitor messages, you must discover five hidden sections of a space ship, and its fuel supply of lunarium (an element found only on the moon) then fly to each supply dump and fight for what you need. Once you've found these, you must figure out how to assemble the ship in the Rocket Lab, and how to use the Fuel Depot to charge your space ship and rocket



RANGER

packet. The key to success in the game is in discovering and stealing supplies of lunarium, then handling them properly to reach the climax of the game on the Moon.

While the maps and graphics of the introductory sequences are fine, even better are the animated arcade sequences, beginning with you trying to take off wearing your rocket pack. To calculate the amount of fuel needed to fly from one country to another you must use the card Decoder Wheel supplied (a neat anti-piracy technique, by the way). In the Take-off sequence you run along the Fort Dix parade ground, hitting the joystick fire button in rhythm until you reach take-off speed, and push forward to launch – or land in a crumpled heap if you get you timing wrong. The more fuel you carry, the harder it is to take off. A successful launch brings up the destination screen, where you click on the country you need to visit, and hope that you can get there without running out of fuel and plunging into the sea!



▲ *Rocket Ranger confronts Garry Williams.*



▲ *"Thar she blows, Jim lad!"*

There are eight excellent arcade sequences, such as the episode in which you have to intercept a fleeing Zeppelin using your Radium Pistol.Later episodes see you fighting off Messershmidt fighters, joining in hand-to-hand combat with a brutal guard and shooting it out with zombie sex slaves (yeah, you heard me right!).

To aid you in your mission you also have a wrist-computer. In and location except Fort Dix you can access the computer to pick a new destination, or call for help if you have run out of fuel. The monitor will also show you some pretty gruesome torture scene if you are too late in rescuing Jane from the Nazis. On this note, it's worth pointing out that like *Defender of the Crown*, the graphics of *Rocket Ranger* make liberal use of glitnting thighs and plunging cleavages; there's also the odd bit of fetishism and bondage, so on the whole it's pretty unsuitable for adults.

Oddly enough, there's no game save feature; the manual claims that a complete game normally takes only an hour, which sounds to me like an underestimate.

If there is a problem with *Rocket Ranger* it is that there is a certain inevtiable amount or repetition involved in playing the game. Unlike, say, a straighforward shoot 'em-up, where you progress from one level to the next blasting successfully more challenging waves of targets, *Rocket Ranger* shares some of the features of an adventure game. If you fail to complete one section, you won't necessarily lose the game; you'll just find yourself back in an earlier situation, forced to play through the scenario again. Basically this is only likely to become a problem if you aren't any good at playing the game!

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	8
► OVERALL	9

UPDATE . . .

There's a Commodore 64 version of Rocket Ranger planned for October. Cost will be £14.99. Early in the New Year there'll be IBM and Atari ST versions.

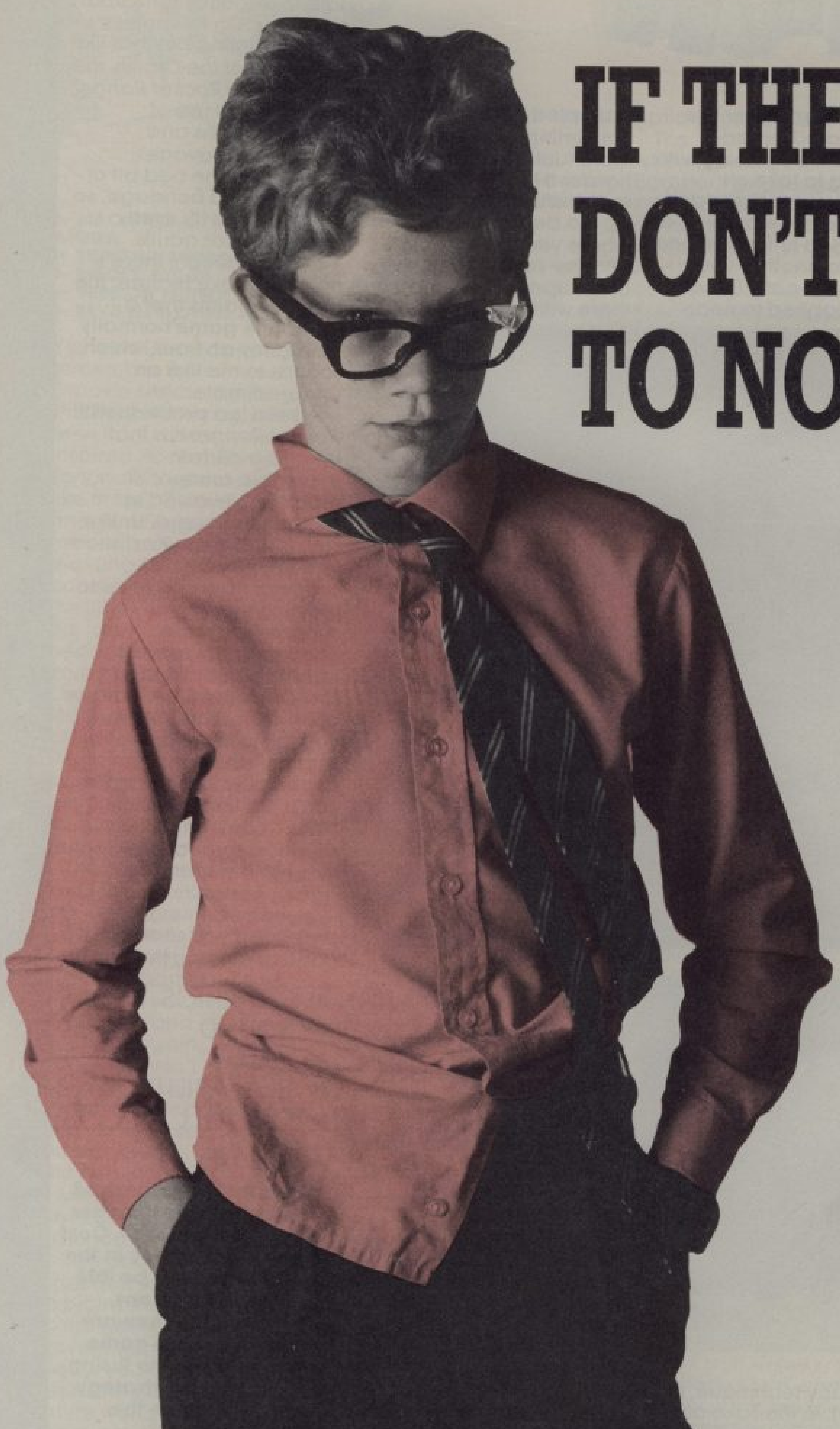
The next Cinemaware interactive video game will be Lords of the Rising Sun, an oriental strategy game, initially on the Amiga.

Also in the pipeline are three sports simulations; TV Sports American Football first, followed by basketball and boxing games later in the year.



◄ *Rocket Ranger: a water pistol, a space ship and a bald patch.*

IF THE GIRLS DON'T SEEM TO NOTICE . . .



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INTENSI

Reviews

► **MACHINES: SPECTRUM/C64.**
► **SUPPLIER: FIREBIRD.**
► **PRICE: £7.95 SPEC CASS, £9.95 C64 CASS, £12.95 C64 DISK.**
► **VERSION TESTED: C64.**
► **REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.**

Andrew Braybrook has been very quiet since the much-delayed *Morpheus* was released at the beginning of this year. He actually finished programming the game last September, and since then has been busily working away on *Intensity*, his latest game.

Unlike nearly all of Braybrook's previous games, there's no shooting or scrolling, although *Intensity* does bear many of his hallmarks, including bas-relief graphics, excellent presentation and *Paradroid*-style sound effects.

So, if there's no scrolling or shooting, what do you have to do? Well, the action is set in the far reaches of the galaxy on a distant space station. Alien forces have invaded, and it's up to the player to rescue the colonists from the occupied sections of the station using a skimmer and remote control drone.

Each screen is viewed from above and represents a part of the space station. The player has the skimmer under his direct control, and there's also a remote control drone parked on the ground. It's moved by pressing the fire button, whereupon it lifts off and moves to the point where the fire button was depressed. Make sure that the skimmer gets out of the way of the drone, though, as they can collide in mid-air, destroying both.

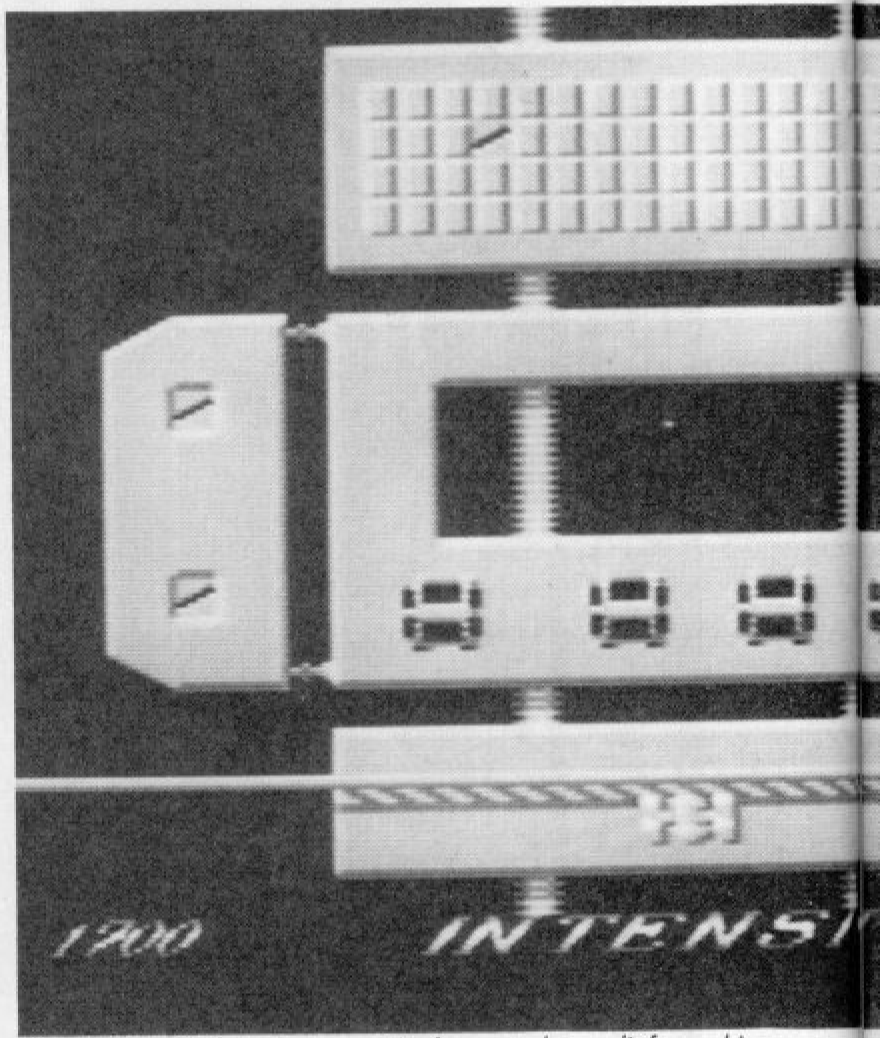
Landscape features vary from screen to screen, but each one has at least two airlocks, from which the colonists emerge, and a landing pad. Colonists attempt to walk towards the drone, but since they only walk in straight lines often get stuck behind an obstacle. This is where the point of the drone movement comes in; and the drone is guided to a suitable place where the colonist may board. When enough people have been picked up, the landing pad flashes, and the drone is guided onto it to finish the screen.

Every time a colonist is rescued, an R appears and floats around the screen. If it's collected by the Skimmer, a resource unit is added to the bank. These can be used to buy faster and more powerful skimmers and drones – although they often take time to build, so order early.

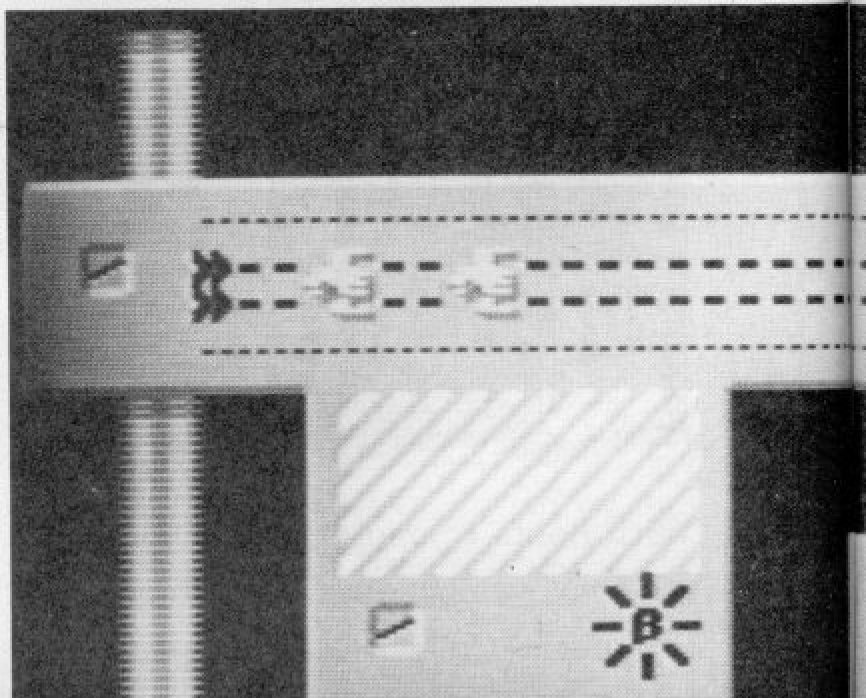
There are five type of alien craft: Spores, Stalkers, Podules, Trackers and Nuclons. Stalkers are the simpliest life form, and are destroyed when hit by the skimmer or drone, or when they collide with a landscape feature or one another. If one lands it turns into a Stalker, which is again destroyed when hit by the skimmer or drone. If it runs into a colonist it turns into a Nuclon, which heads towards the drone, downgrading or destroying it on contact. A similar reaction occurs if it

▼ The current level indicator.



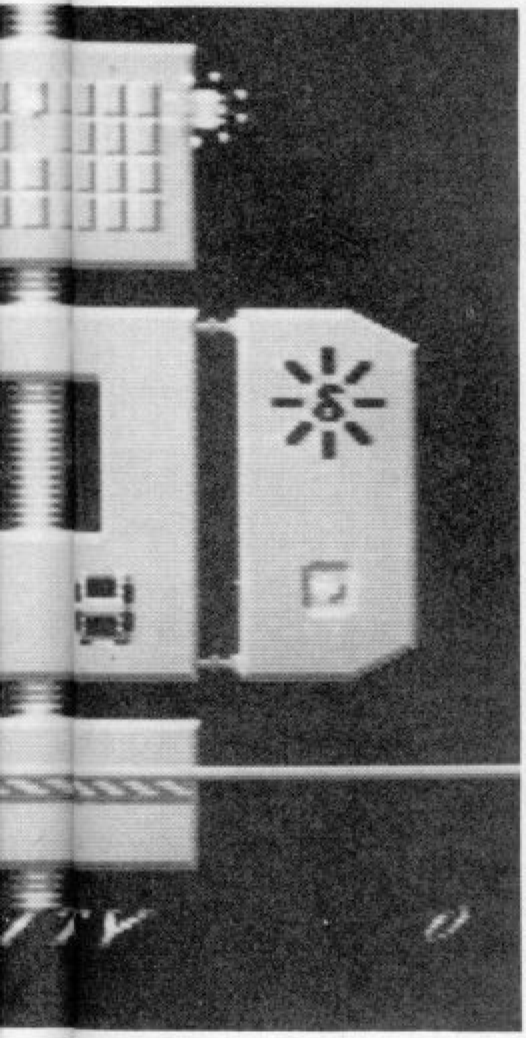


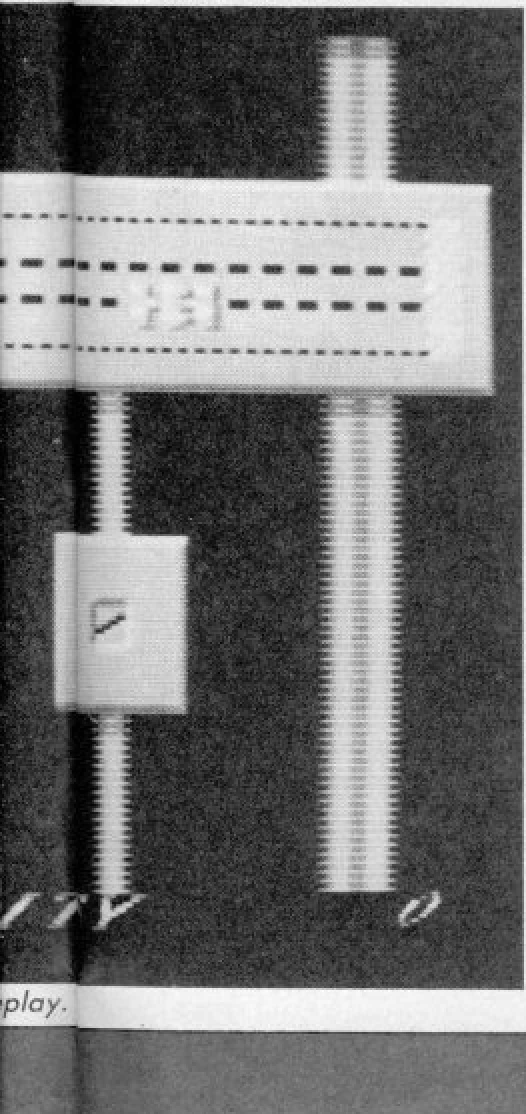
▲ *Braybrook's latest unsurprisingly sports bas-relief graphics.*



▲ *Intensity: a mixture of old ideas and new, but uninspiring gamepla*

ITY





...play.

hits the skimmer. Podules are formed when a Spore is mutating to a Stalker, and is vulnerable to attack from the drone or Skimmer, and Trackers are dangerous creatures which home in on the skimmer and drone, destroying or downgrading it on contact.

As the game continues, aliens become faster and faster. The mission ends when all skimmers or drones are destroyed, or the final screen is reached, whereupon an escape shuttle is launched from the station.

Although *Intensity* has a nicely thought out scenario and some neat touches, the gameplay is dull. The game merely consists of moving the drone from one location to another and running the skimmer into aliens, and for me that just isn't exciting. The lack of variety in the gameplay soon gives rise to apathetic feelings, and I found my attention wandering after a couple of sessions: there just isn't enough in the action to keep you playing for a long period of time.

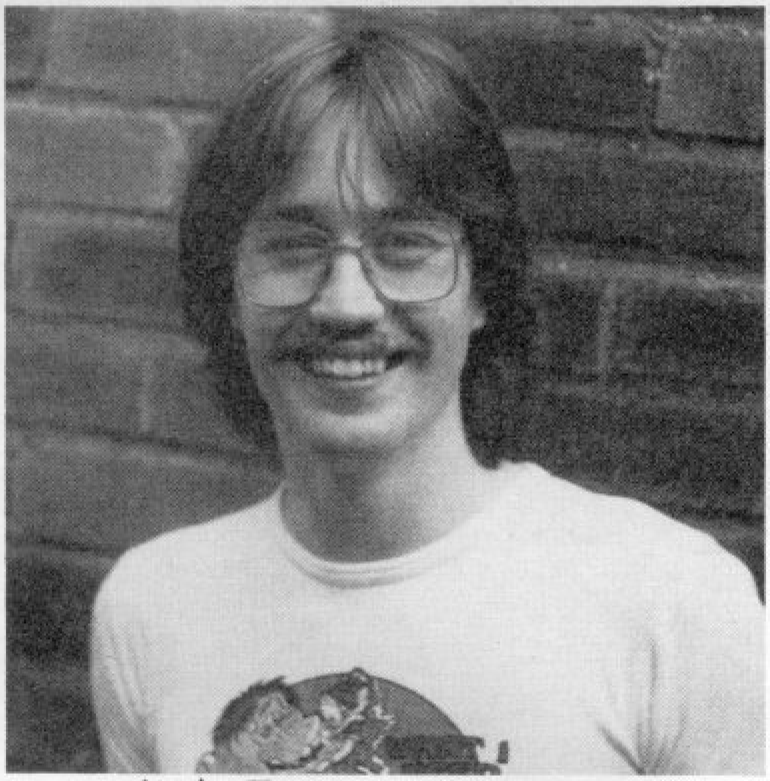
The bas-relief graphics and very standard fare, and many of the backdrops are comprised of what looks like cast-off sections from *Uridium*, and the sprites are similar to the ones used in *Alleykat*. Even the sound effects are similar to the ones used in *Paradroid* and *Uridium!*

If you're a Braybrook fan, try before you buy: you might find yourself disappointed – I certainly was.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	5
► PLAYABILITY	5
► OVERALL	6

UPDATE . . .

The other Graftgold founder, Steve Turner, is currently putting the finishing touches to the Spectrum version, which will be out at the end of September. Obviously the graphics will be different, but gameplay will be identical.



ANDREW BRAYBROOK

Profile

Andrew Braybrook first hit the limelight with Gribbly's Day Out, his first original game which was released by Hewson back in mid-1985. It's an excellent little game and features ones of the cutest characters ever to come out of a Commodore 64.

Eager to repeat that success, Andrew worked busily on his next project for six months, and the final result was Paradroid, which was received to critical acclaim and was widely regarded as a classic.

Uridium followed, and again was acclaimed as a classic. It's a two-way horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up sporting some excellent bas-relief graphics, which were swiftly becoming a Braybrook hallmark.

By now Braybrook had a strong following, who awaited impatiently for his next release. It finally arrived in the guise of Alleykat, a vertically scrolling race game. Although it's a good game, it did have one major flaw which allowed a player to complete screens very easily. Still, the graphics were up to Braybrook's usual high standards.

In early 1987, Andrew started work on his most ambitious project yet: Morpheus. When the game was finished, much controversy was caused when he and the rest of the Graftgold team signed to Firebird. A court case followed, but Hewson couldn't stop Firebird publishing Morpheus.

And now, after a string of great games, Braybrook has produced Intensity, arguably his most disappointing release yet. Has Braybrook gone off the boil?

Write in to C+VG and let us know too.

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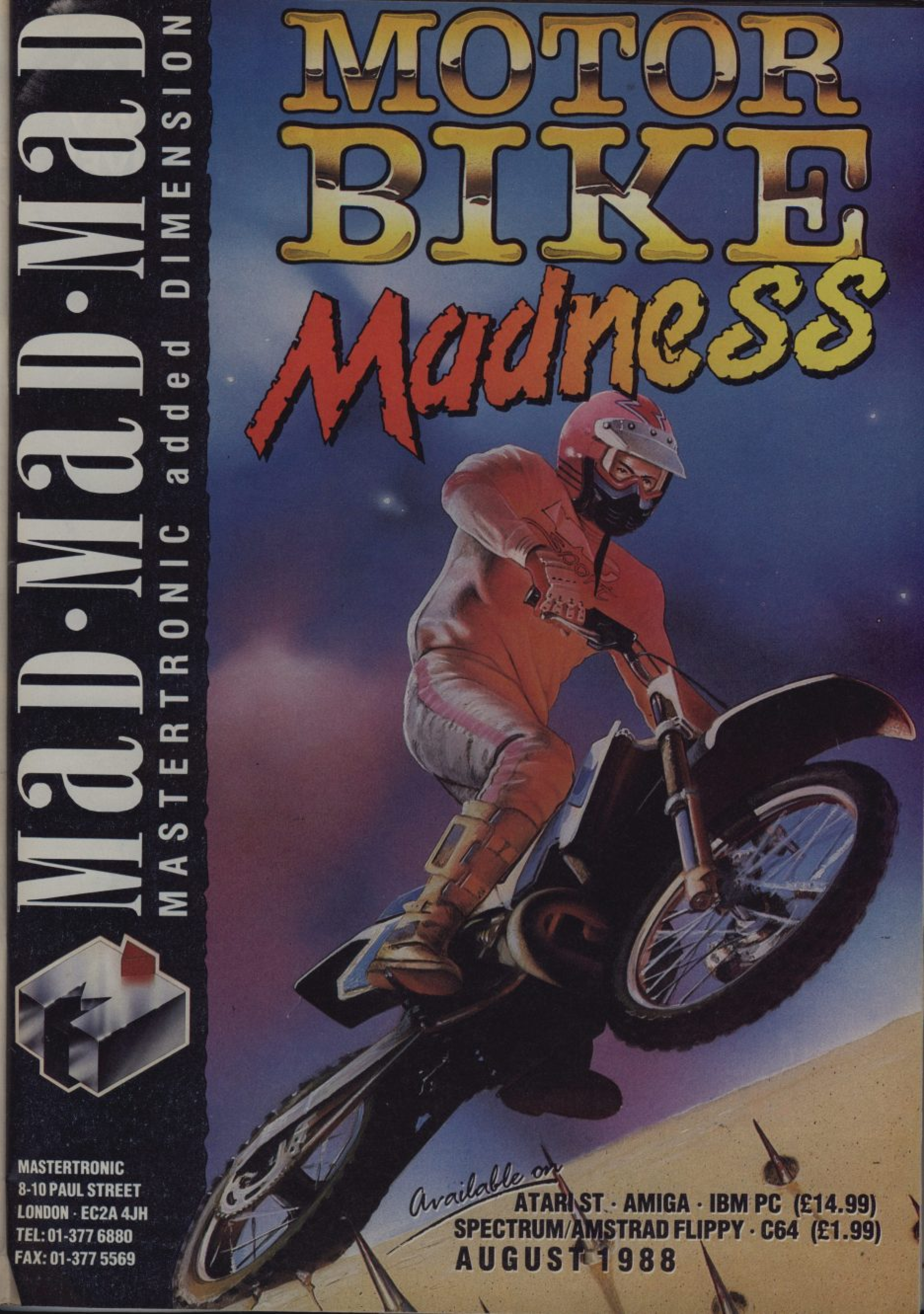
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SUMMER OLYMPIAD

► SUPPLIER: TYNESOFT.
► MACHINES: SPECTRUM/C64/PC/AMIGA/BBC/ELECTRON.
► PRICE: IBM £24.95, ST/AMIGA £19.95, C64 DISK/BBC DISK £14.95, C64 TAPE/BBC TAPE £9.95, SPEC CASS £7.95.
► VERSION TESTED: C64.
► REVIEWER: TONY DILLON.

Tynesoft's latest release is *Summer Olympiad*, one of the most beautifully polished and presented Olympic simulations since *Summer Games II*. The only problem is that it's too small, with only five events to challenge the player. Still, what you get is very good.

First off is the skeet shooting. There are seven stations positioned in a semi circle around a field, and at either end of the ring are the skeet launchers. Using a crosshair, you have to aim your gun in the general direction of the skeet and try and hit it before it drops to the ground. Your figure is positioned in the centre of the screen, and what a big fellow he is too; fully animated as well. As you swing the crosshair around the screen, he swings his gun, which is smooth and very realistic.

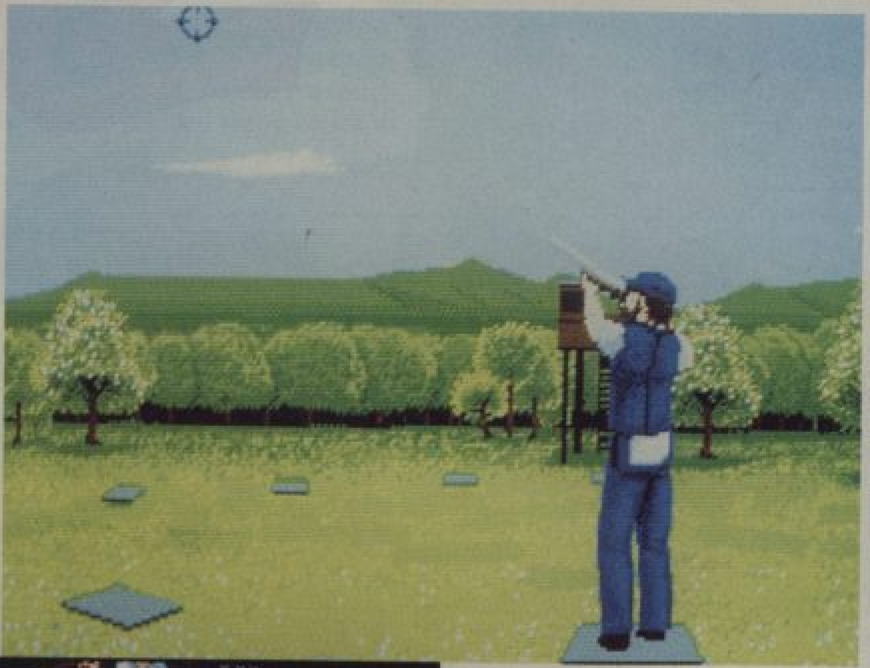
Then you've got the fencing. Two large and well-drawn opponents line up with each other, salute, and try and see who can stab each other first. The computer opponent seems to have the edge over you in the respect that he knows the exact distance to stand to give you the sharp end of his foil. As before, the graphics are great. I particularly liked the crowd in the background and the two TV camera's that track your every move.

Next is the triple jump. Viewed from behind, above and to the right of the runner, you have to try and get his speed up to maximum and at the appropriate moment, hold down the fire button to achieve the perfect jump.

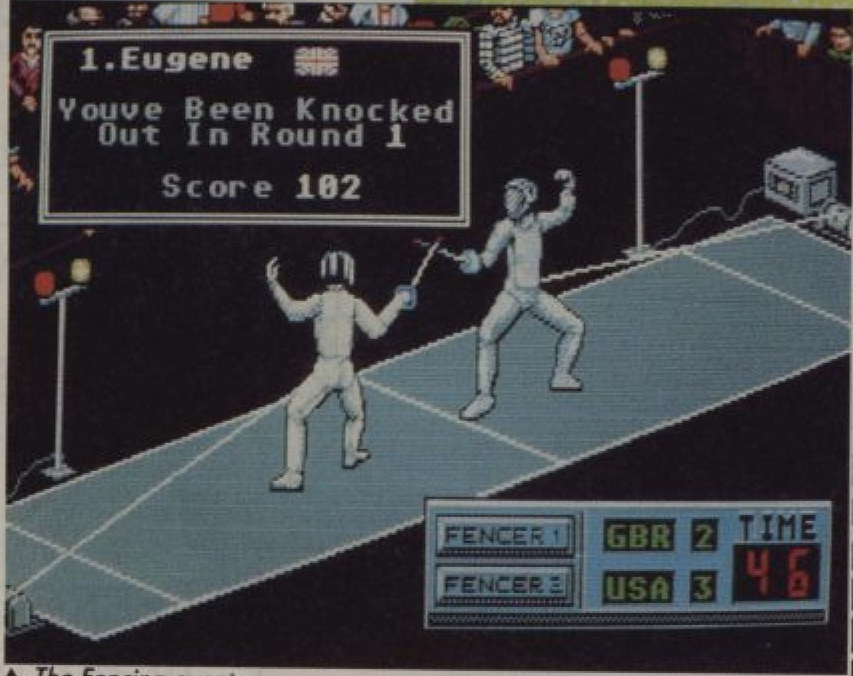
No onto the diving. This is done in much the same way as the cliff diving in *World Games*, except that you now have a lot more control. Using different joystick directions, you have to make your on-screen counterpart twist, flip and tumble, as well as making him straighten out just before he hits the water. As usual nice big graphics and smooth animation.

The last event is the hurdles, and after all the others, it's a bit of a let down. Waggle your joystick to get the man to run faster, and then fire to make him jump. At least the 3D update is smooth.

Summer Olympiad is a great game, but lacks the lasting appeal that makes it worth the asking price.



▲ *Skeet Shooting.*



▲ *The Fencing event.*

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	7
► VALUE	7

UPDATE . . .

The ST version has some wicked graphics, though slightly smaller than the 64's and boasts different control methods. It plays just as well, in some cases a lot better, and is one of the better sports releases on the ST at the moment.

The Amiga version should be graphically impressive, and will feature the same gameplay as the ST.


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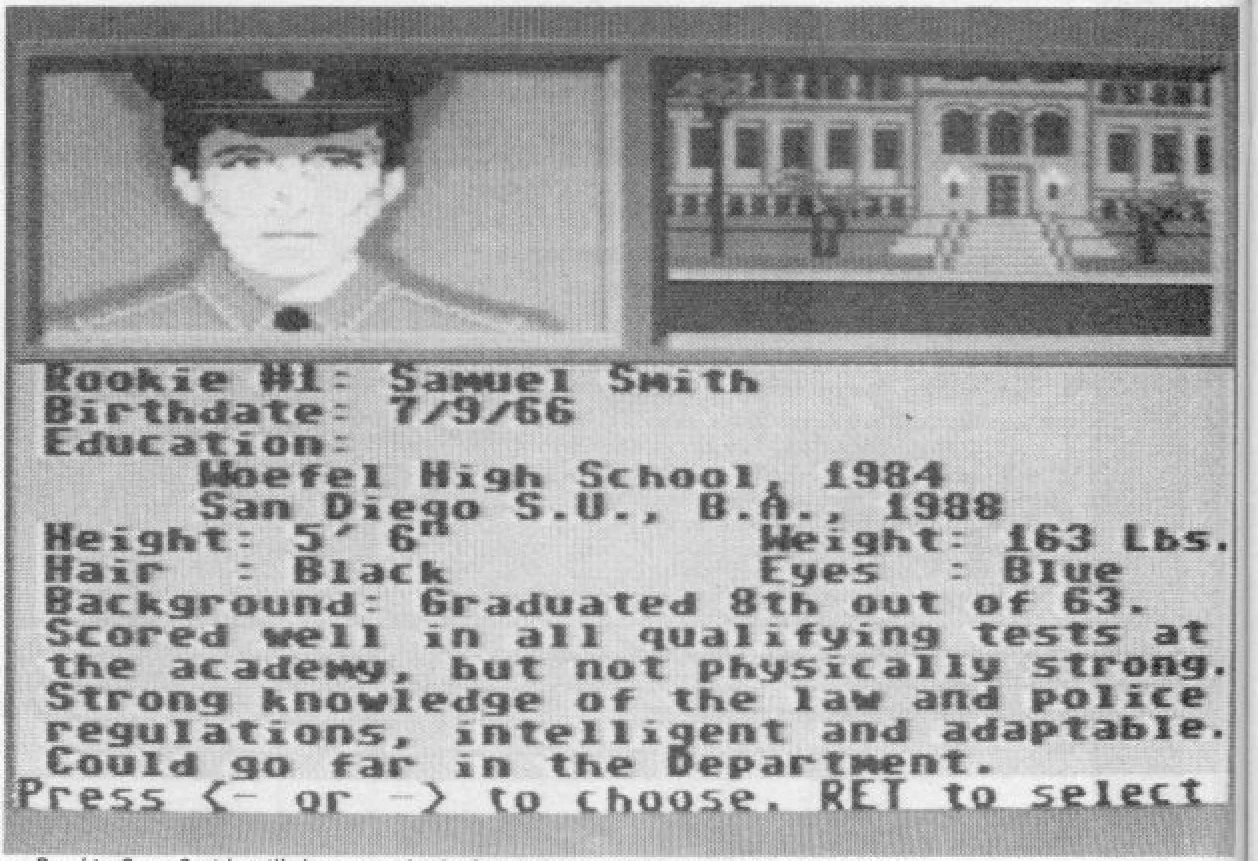
Reviews

L.A. CR

- ► MACHINE: CBM 64.
- ► SUPPLIER: EPYX/US GOLD.
- ► PRICE: £14.99 DISK.
- ► REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.

Ever fancied being an undercover agent? Not the sort who just runs along blasting everything that moves, *a la Rolling Thunder*, but one who has to use his eyes, his brain and his wits to solve a really challenging case? Good. You've got the job.

L A Crackdown is the best thing to come out of Epyx for some time. The clever part is that you don't play the undercover cop yourself; you play the mission controller, communicating with a rookie using a hidden transceiver. The rookie will normally obey your orders, but if you mishandle the case he's likely to quit on you – if he doesn't get killed first.

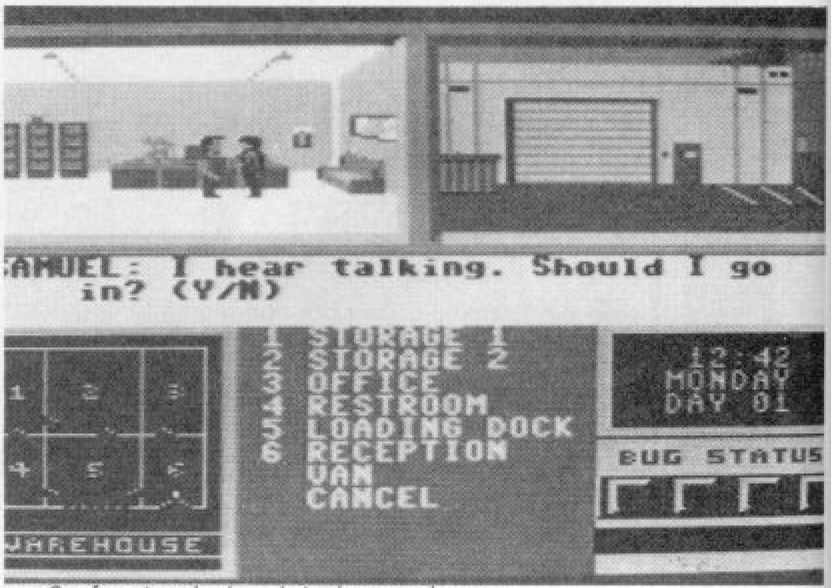


▲ *Rookie Sam Smith will do a good job if you don't ask him to do the impossible.*

Your mission is to investigate an operation importing electronic equipment from the Far East. Is it a cover for drugs smuggling? Let's hope so, or there won't be much of a game. You can visit different locations, search for clues, plant bugs, take photos, question suspects, trail them, and, when you have enough evidence, start to make arrests.

The game's menu driven, and combines text and graphics very smoothly. After naming your character and choosing a rookie from a selection of four upstanding officers, the main screen display divides into five sections. At the top left is a graphic display showing the interiors of buildings, such as the operation's warehouse and a suspicious sushi bar (the bar's suspicious, not the sushi). At the right are shown the exteriors of the buildings as seen from your unmarked surveillance van. If any suspects arrive or depart, you can select FOLLOW from the GO TO menu to trail them.

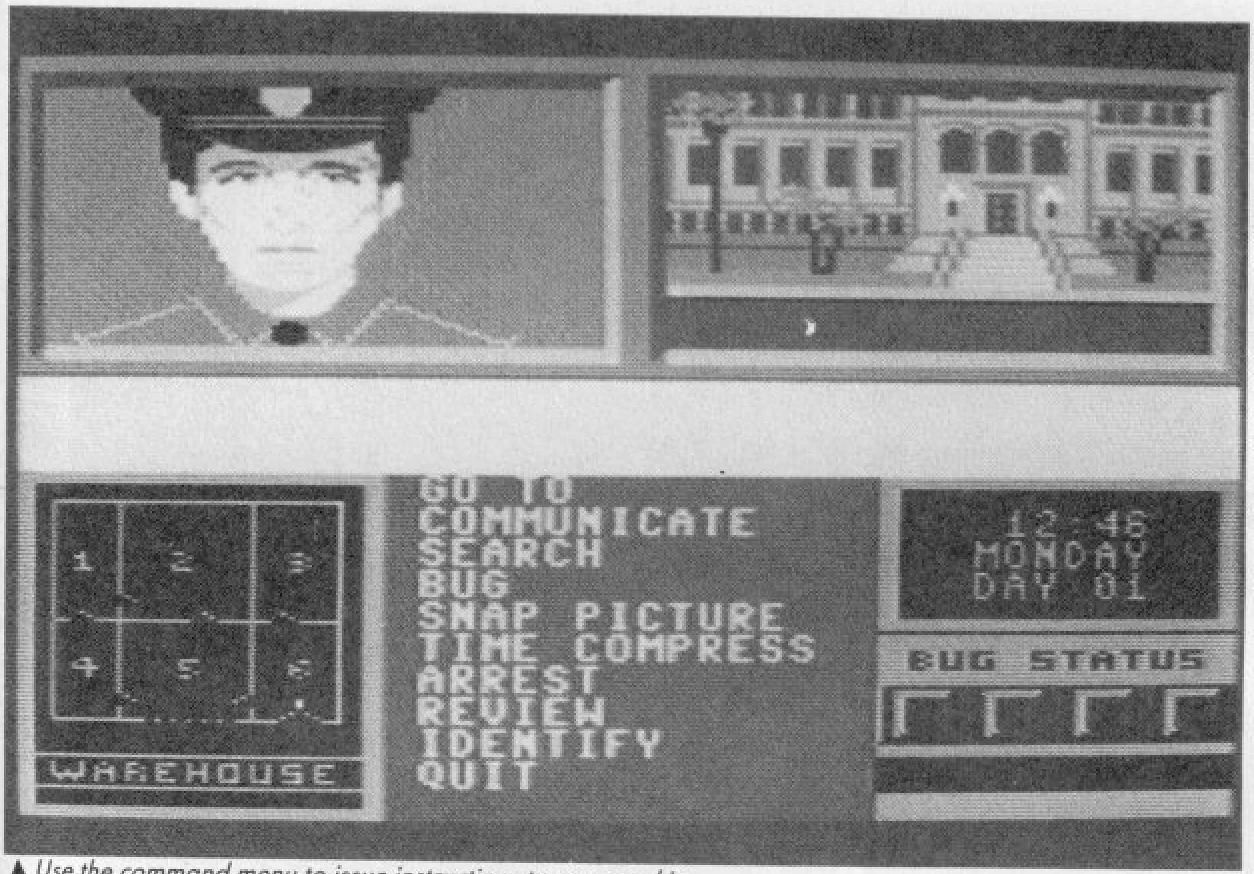
At the bottom left you see maps of Los Angeles, or of the insides of the buildings. Each room is numbered, and you just have to select a room number to enter it. At the bottom centre appears the main text menu from which you select your next command with joystick or keyboard; and bottom left, displays showing the time and date, and the status of your four available bugs. Planting phone bugs in strategic places is the key to obtaining vital information. Once a bug indicator lights up, you know it has recorded a conversation which you can replay in your van. Combined with snapshots of schedules from the warehouse, these form your first leads, and direct you towards the strange Scottish sushi bar, the boss villain's beach house and so on.



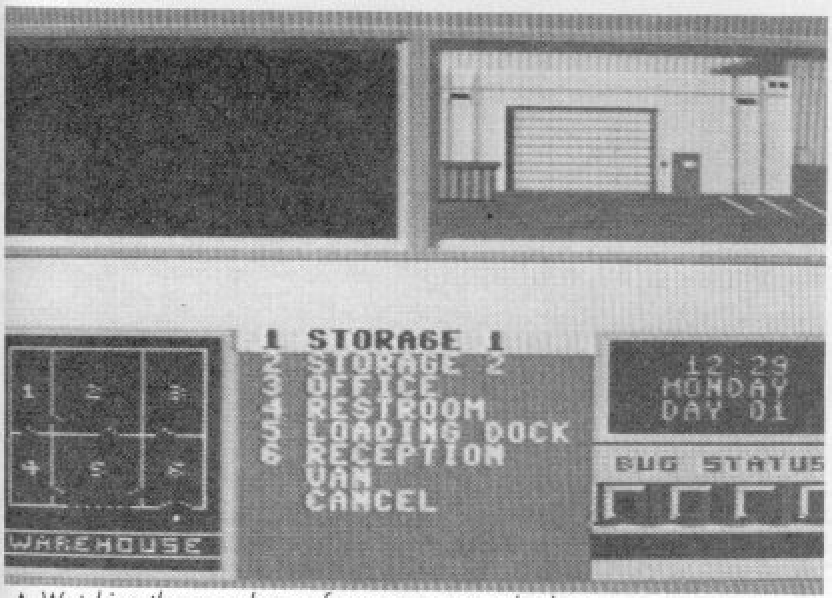
▲ *Confronting the hoods in the warehouse.*

I thought I'd seen a few things in my time – but a Scottish Sushi bar. OK Los Angeles is as everyone knows the decadence capital of the world – but this strange mixture of cultures – anyway on with the tale . . .

ACKDOWN



▲ *Use the command menu to issue instructions to your rookie.*



▲ *Watching the warehouse from your unmarked van.*

You really have to think about what you're doing to play this game; for instance, you can't plant bugs or search the warehouse during the day, because the thugs will throw you out. Return at night, because if you try to insist on making a search, or arresting someone without enough evidence, your rookie will quit. Also remember to select the REST option every hours, or he'll collapse! Using the TIME COMPRESS option you can speed through uneventful days or long stakeouts.

The graphics are simple and nicely-drawn, with clever touches such as moving vans and animated characters. Typical commands which you can issue include COMMUNICATE, which initiates a dialogue between your rookie and other characters; SEARCH, FOLLOW, and IDENTIFY, which brings up rap sheets of the various plug-uglies and the sleazoids you'll encounter. The portraits are nice, but comments such as "normally wears a moustache" aren't much help in your police work.

Great fun, though not terribly complicated; for instance, there are only four different buildings to investigate. The good thing about the game is that it's completely realistic; no jet-packs, wrist-communicators or stun guns. You can't even shoot your way out of trouble, and there aren't many games where that's true.

Whatever about the specific verdict on *LA Crackdown* you have to give Epyx full marks for persevering with this unique game play system. It really is one possible future way in which adventure games can develop – which may turn out to be a life saver for the computerised lateral thinking puzzle. It would be a great loss to the computer game hobby if puzzle and whodunnit games were totally eclipsed by the role play fantasy type of game. Sure, these games are excellent in their own right – but they don't have the sheer weight of puzzlability that a good whodunnit style adventure can create. *LA Crackdown* and games like it are a lifeline for adventure enthusiasts.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	4
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	8
► OVERALL	8

UPDATE . . .

There are no versions of *LA Crackdown* planned for other machines. Several new Epyx titles will be launched at the PC Show, but they're all sports simulations, including 4x4 Roadracing, Winter Edition Games, Street Sports Soccer and Final Assault, a mountain-climbing simulation.

Reviews

THE BOBBY YAZZ SHOW

► **MACHINES: SPEC, C64, AMS.**
► **SUPPLIER: DESTINY.**
► **PRICE: £8.95.**
► **VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM.**
► **REVIEWER: TONY DILLON.**

Everybody loves a game show, right? I mean, with such lovable hosts as Jim "get your hands off my bully" Bowen, Ted "I can only go up to 123 because I haven't got a brain" Rogers and Nicholas "I'm alive and well, where am I?" Parsons, it's difficult not to. Even more so with the prizes at stake nowadays. Remember the good old days, when you'd be happy with a hand crafted Caribbean wooden mixing spoon. Nowadays it's all hi-fis with built in vacuum cleaners and combination plant pots/coat hangers. In the future, though, things will be a lot different. It won't just be the prizes you'll lose if you don't get 301 or more with 27 darts, it'll be your life. It's all in the name of good clean family entertainment, though, so no-one's complaining.

The most popular gameshow of the future, however, is the Bobby Yazz Show, and Destiny has cleverly licensed it before its creator is born. That way they can sue for infringement on copyright when the show does come around. Clever, eh?

Bobby's show involves the contestants controlling a little remote ball kind of affair through four gruelling tasks, being careful not to hit any mines or other balls. Remember gang, if the ball goes, you go, as Bobby says.

The first task is relatively simple. A simple grid is displayed, and the contestants have a very short time to turn all the squares from blue to red, simply by rolling the ball over them. Opposition comes in the form of some nasties that, just like you, can change the square's colour, except they change all the red ones back to blue. Frustration city.

The second, affectionately termed blind level, has the contestants floating eerily above some distant planet on an invisible maze. They have a short time limit to find their way to the exit, normally on the other side of the screen.

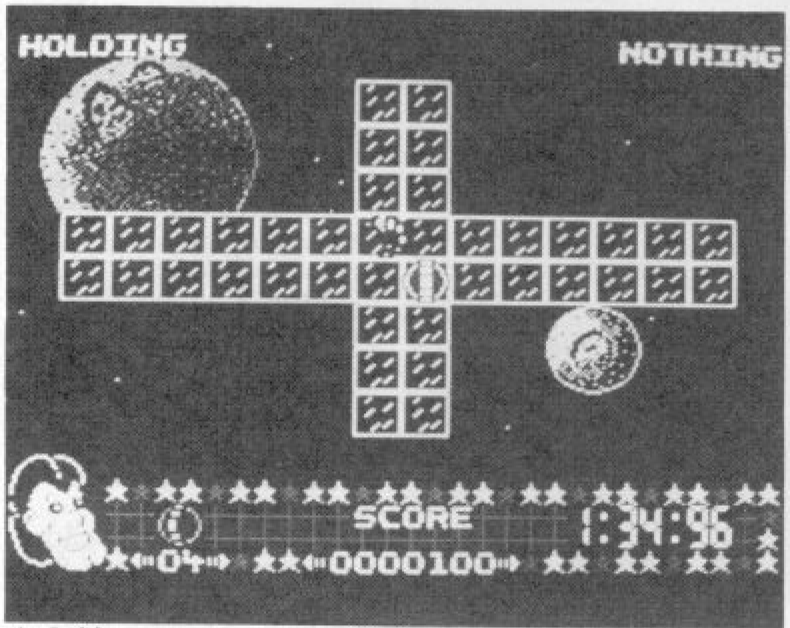
Then it's on to the key level. On here, the contestants have to collect all the keys and get to the exit before the time runs out. As usual, there are all the regular nasties and things to hinder you.

Get through all that and you get to the bonus stage, which just entails you grabbing all you can in the unfairly short space of time you're allotted. Get through all that, and you get to to onto next week's show. Yeeaaah!

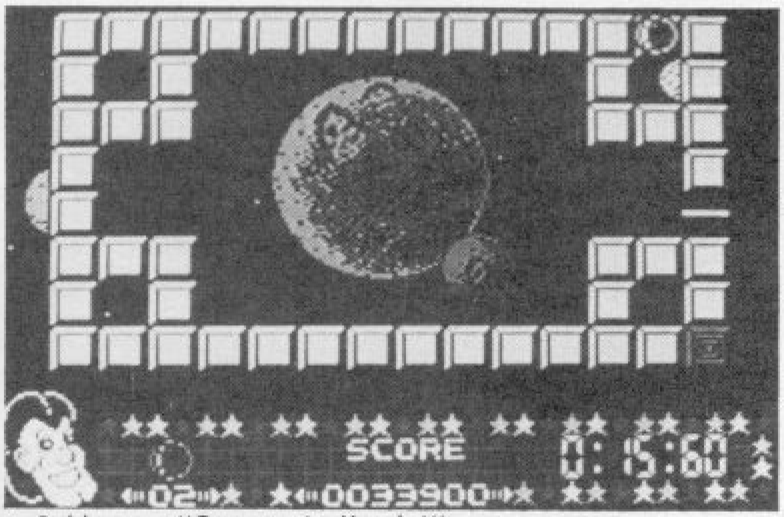
Between some of the levels, and these do come as welcome breathers, are the commercials. Short animated films, almost blipverts, they advertise such greats as "Soapo III – better than our last rubbish – it nearly works" and "Rocky XI, the musical." Unfortunately, there aren't enough of them to make them interesting for any great length of time. I found that to be the main problem with this game. It's just too short and repetitive to be in any way addictive or lasting.

It's not a bad little game, but I think it's the 'little' that stops it from being a great game. A novel idea, and one I can see being copied quite a lot.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	4
► PLAYABILITY	6
► VALUE	5
► OVERALL	5



▲ *Bobby Yazz: it's a "gruelling task" and no mistake.*



▲ *Bobby says "Opportunity Knocks!"*



▲ *In the fine tradition of games show hosts, Bobby lack a brain.*

UPDATE . . .

The Bobby Yazz show is the Bobby Yazz show is the Bobby Yazz show. Since there's no messing with success, all three versions are very similar bar graphical differences. No plans for a 16-bit version though.

Expect a more colourful, blocky C64 as per usual.

The games they said couldn't be written

QUADRALIEN





ST Screen Shot

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STARGOOSE!





Amiga Screen Shot

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Amiga Screen Shot

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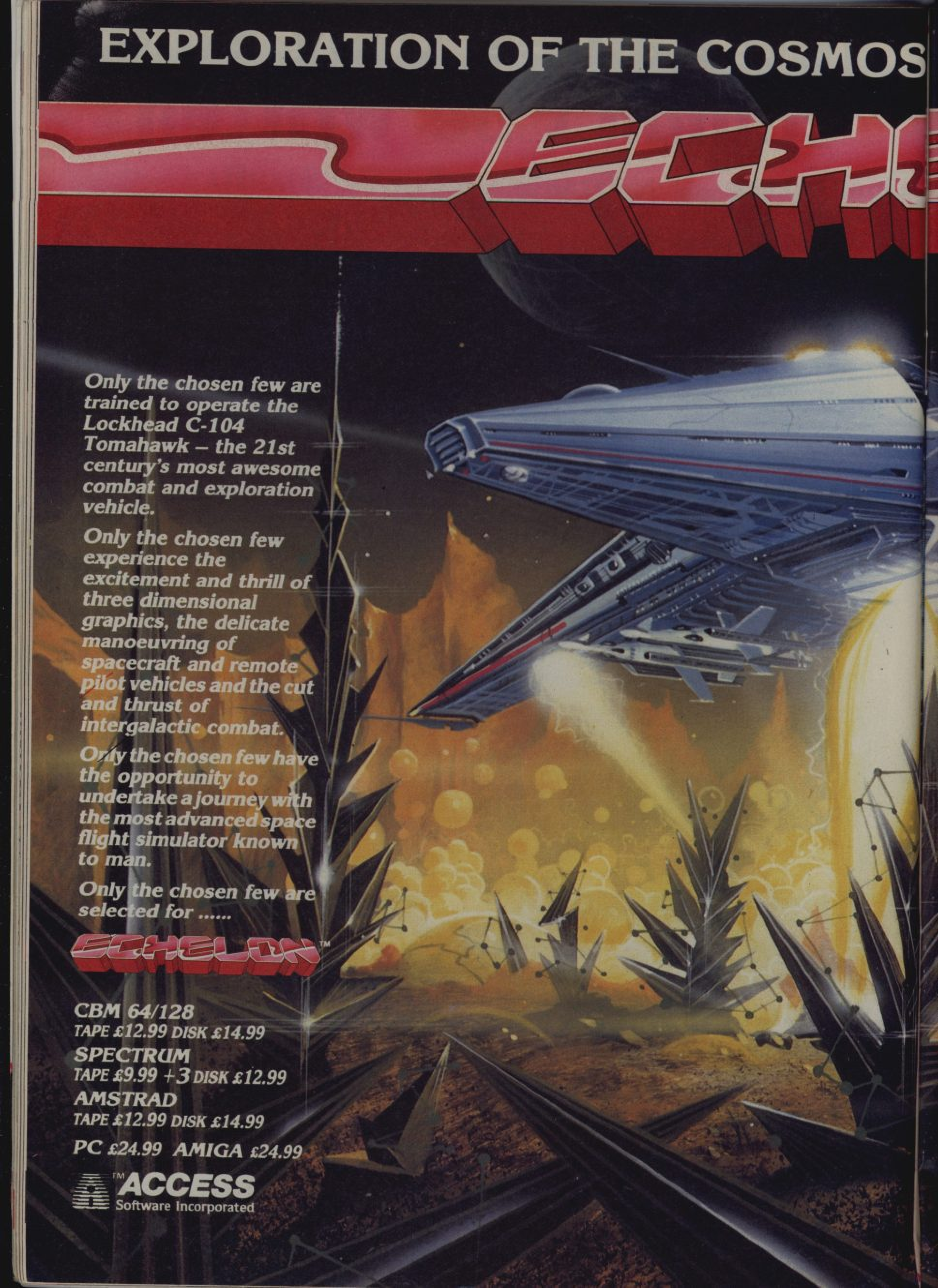
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Reviews

1943

► **MACHINES: SPECTRUM 48/128/+3, AMSTRAD CPC, C64/128 ATARI ST, AMIGA.**
► **SUPPLIER: US GOLD/CAPCOM.**
► **PRICES: SPECTRUM 48/128 £8.99 CASS +3 £12.99 DISK, C64/128 £9.99 CASS £14.99, DISK AMSTRAD CPC £9.99 CASS £14.99 DISK, ATARI ST £19.99, AMIGA £24.99.**
► **VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM 48/128.**
► **REVIEWER: GARY WHITTA.**

Anybody who's been a computer gamer for any reasonable length of time will remember that *1942*, Capcom's original (and ageing) coin-op was licenced and converted by Elite quite a while back. *1943* was released by Capcom fairly recently and was snapped up by US Gold as part of their mass-licencing deal with Capcom.

1943 is basically very much in the same mould of its predecessor so much so that it's almost exactly the same game, albeit with several improvements and gameplay tweaks. The game is set in World War II and recreates the famous Battle of Midway. Taking control of a fighter bomber, the player's mission is to fly deep into enemy territory and wreak havoc.

Scenario aside, *1943* is a vertically scrolling shoot 'em-up with some novel twists, the most notable of these being the simultaneous two-player option that allows you to team up with a mate and cause twice as much damage.

Planes fly down the screen and are easily disposed of by letting rip with a quick volley of machine gun fire. Slightly more difficult to hit are the formation planes that spiral around the screen. Shooting an entire wave of these leaves behind a POW symbol which can be collected to upgrade the plane's weapons. Fortunately, unlike it's predecessor, *1943* works on a system whereby crashing into an enemy plane or getting hit by a bullet won't kill you. Instead you're given just one life that is represented as an energy bar which is depleted every time you take a hit; when the energy hits zero, the game is over.

At the end of each level you must attack a fleet of heavily-armed warships by blowing away the symbols on the decks of each. Managing to do this completes the level, boosts your score and energy and sends you onto the next level. Later levels see the unwelcome arrival of huge megabomber planes that take up almost the entire screen, spewing out bullets with gay abandon and requires continous machine gun fire to shoot it down in flames (a very satisfying experience).

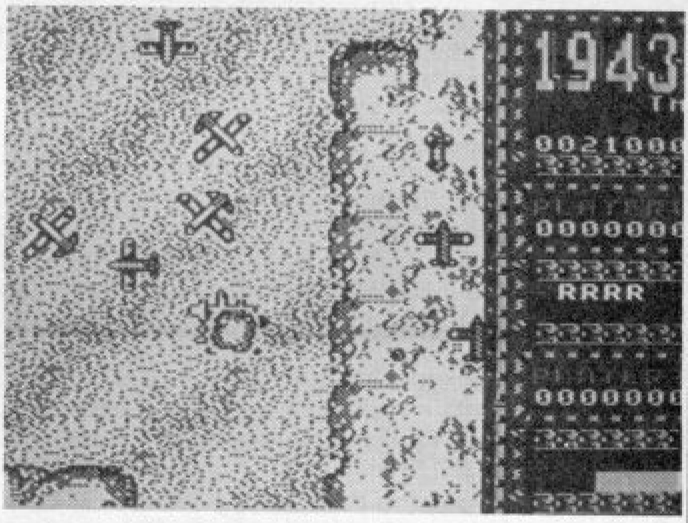
1943 is a very good game indeed, but doesn't offer enough improvements over the original. Graphically everything is fine, although things can get a bit confusing at times. Sound is adequate and there's certainly enough gameplay to keep you going, although it is a mite easy due to the new 'energy bar' system. The two-player option is well executed, but even so the game overall is a bit dated. One for the younger gamers perhaps?

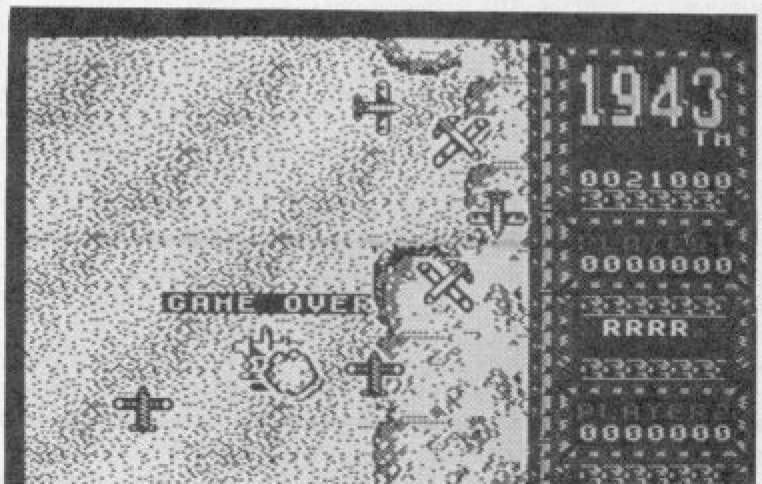
► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	5
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	7
► OVERALL	6

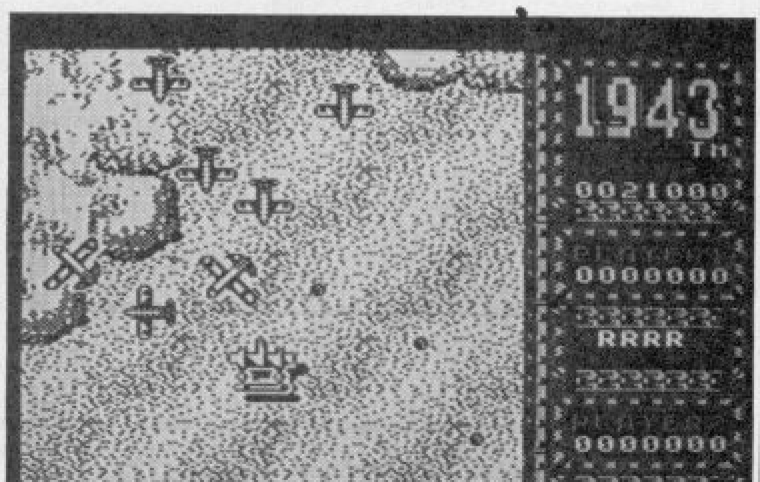
UPDATE . . .

Amstrad and Commodore versions should play very similarly, but boast improved graphics and sound.

The 16-bit versions are looking very promising.







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19

► MACHINES: COMMODORE 64/SPECTRUM.
► SUPPLIER: CASCADE.
► PRICES: SPECTRUM £9.99/£14.99 DISK, CBM 64 £9.99/£14.99 DISK, AMIGA £19.99.
► VERSIONS TESTED: CBM 64/SPECTRUM.
► REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.

It's been a long time coming, but 19 is finally here. By the time it's in the shops, it will have been a year in the making – from one PCW Show to the next – and while this four-event military training simulation has several good things going for it, given that much time it should have been not just acceptable , but astounding.

Inspired by the Paul Hardcastle song of the same name. *19* is the story of a draftee drawn into the Vietnam war. He looks pretty miserable about it on the title screen, but so would you if you'd had all



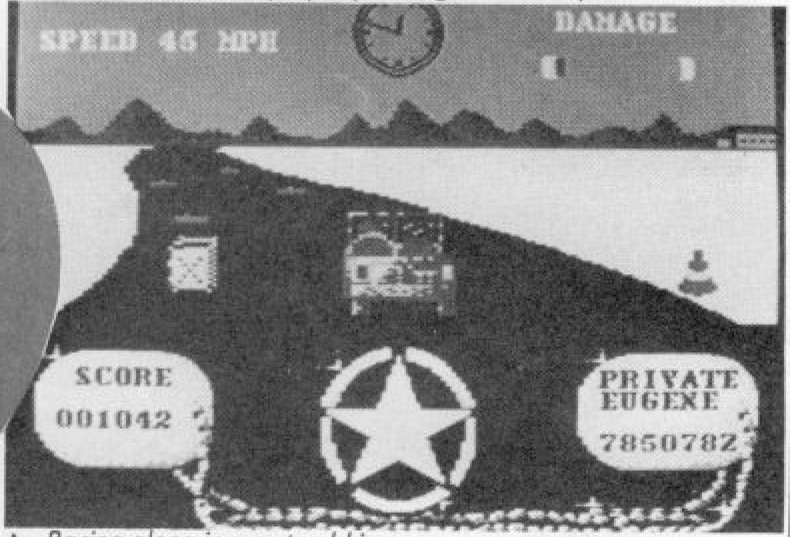
▲ *N-n-not a bad game.*

your hair shorn off.

You don't get any of the battlezone atmosphere here, though – in part one what you get is several training exercises, similar in style and content to Ocean's coin-op conversion *Combat School*. After an astonishing Rob Hubbard rendition of the music, complete with synthesised helicopters, gunfire and screams, you can select and name up to four competitors. In each of the four training exercises to come, you will be assessed in three areas. Your accuracy in shooting, jumping obstacles, driving and fighting give your co-ordination rating, your stamina is calculated from how long you compete in each routine, and your morale from your overall performance. After each event you earn a rating from 1 (Abysmal) to 10 (Exceptional), and your overall score can be saved and used in the forthcoming sequel *19 Part two – Combat Zone.*

First, the assault course. On this left-to-right scrolling event there are eight courses, each to be completed against a decreasing time limit. The trick is to gauge your position and time your presses on the fire button correctly so that, as you run up to each obstacle, your power meter rises to the correct amount to get you through. Among the challenges is a brick wall, vaulting horses, stepping posts, ditches and monkey bars. Animation in this section is fairly good, but control is a little tricky – you find yourself plummeting off the bars as soon as you build up a decent speed.

Part two, the shooting range is impressive technically, but a little dull to play. An enlarged section of the background is shown through your infra-red sniper scope as you pan around the view. Using your limited ammunition supply, you must knock off the pop-up



▲ *Racing along in a rusty old jeep.*

soldiers, while avoiding taking out women or children, which will decrease your score by 1,000 points (unlike in the real war, where they gave you medals).

Next up is the jeep driving section. We've seen plenty of these scrolling-roadway efforts in the past, and this is basically just more of the same thing: accelerate along the road, pick up helmets, boots, ammo boxes, dog tags, jerry cans and stars for bonus points, avoid the sides of the roads, haybales, cones, tyres and fences which slow you down, and the rocks, logs, tree-stumps and fences which bring you to a standstill. Each bit of damage slows your jeep down, and if you sustain total damage you're out of action.

Lastly, unarmed combat. Though this is a decent one-to-one beat-'em-up routine, there's nothing new to it: fight eight bouts with the instructor against a time limit, using offensive moves including kicks, butts, jabs and hooks. If you knock him down you get a bonus: if his energy level is higher than yours at the end of a bout, you're out.

As you often find, the Spectrum version of the game has a nicer feel to it, despite the colour and sound limitations. The real problem, though, is that *19 – Part One* is basically a compilation of four unremarkable games rather than one good one. Maybe the proposed *19 Part Two – The Combat Zone* will prove better value for money.

	C64	SPEC
► GRAPHICS	7	7
► SOUND	9	6
► VALUE	6	6
► PLAYABILITY	7	7
► OVERALL	7	7

UPDATE . . .

Spectrum and Commodore versions are available now with 16-bit versions coming up before Christmas, the Amiga conversion first. *19 Part Two – The Combat Zone* will be previewed at the PC Show and is due for release next year.

C+VG HIT!

STAR

► SUPPLIER: LOGOTRON.
► MACHINE: AMIGA/ATARI ST/COMMODORE 64/IBM PC.
► PRICE: £25.95 AMIGA, £24.95 PC, £19.95 ST/C64.
► VERSION TESTED: AMIGA.
► REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.

Apart from *Dropzone* on the C64 and Atari 8-bit, there have been very few good *Defender* type games. Personally I think this is a great shame – if the classic two-way horizontally scrolling gameplay is properly exploited, it gives far more blast-for-blast, thrills and spills than any other shoot 'em up format can ever hope to produce. And in these days of of high-powered machines with wonderful sound and graphics capabilities, there's potential to create a *Defender*-style shoot 'em up to end all shoot 'em ups.

Star Ray goes some way to reaching this ideal, and is a game that'll appease the most demanding of blasting fanatics.

The action is set over seven different levels, each of which is played four times before the next one is tackled. Although the levels look different, the gameplay on all is fundamentally the same. The player takes control of the StarRay ship and defends ground installations from marauding aliens by flying over the two-way horizontally scrolling wrap-around planet and destroying all hostile intruders.

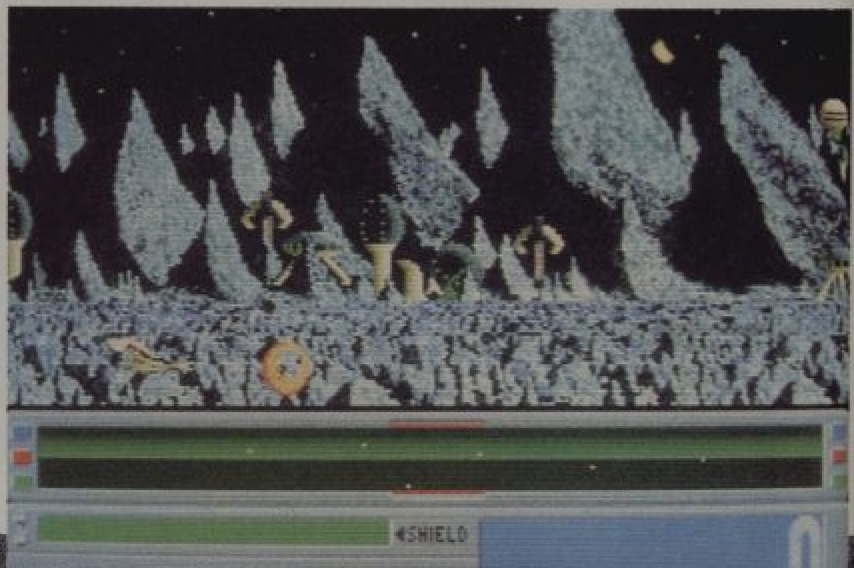
At the bottom of the screen is a radar display showing all alien activity, so that the player can spot impending troublespots or identify approaching hazards and swiftly take the appropriate action.

Each screen consists of several attack waves of aliens, which appear one after the other. Should all enemy craft be destroyed, a points bonus is given in relation to the amount of installations remaining.

As the player progresses through the levels, many different types of alien craft are encountered. Landers



▲ *Battling over the jungle world.*



▲ *Star Ray takes out a perverted emplacement.*

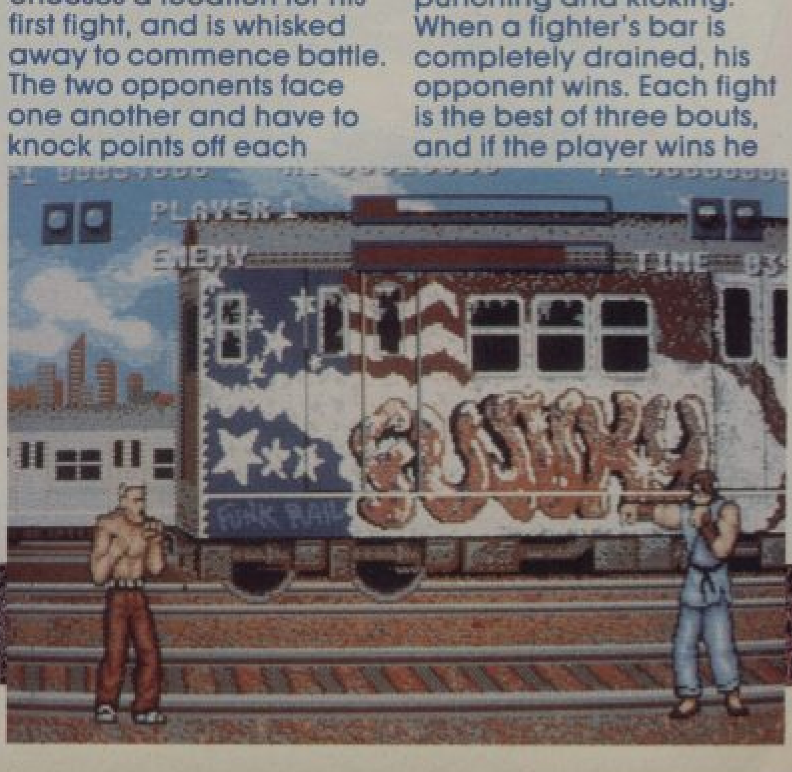
STREET FIGHTER

► SUPPLIER: CAPCOM/GO!
► MACHINES: SPECTRUM/COMMODORE 64/AMSTRAD/ATARI ST/AMIGA.
► PRICE: £8.95 SPEC CASS, £9.99 AMS/C64 CASS, £12.99 SPEC DISK, £14.99 AMS/C64 DISK. 319.99 ST, £24.99 AMIGA.
► VERSIONS TESTED: ST/ AMIGA.
► REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.

Capcom's coin-op, *Street Fighter* didn't exactly take the arcades by storm, but its pneumatic buttons – the harder you hit them, the more effective your on-screen punch – certainly added a new twist to the rather hackneyed one-on-one beat 'em up formula.

The scenario is pretty ordinary: the player takes the role of a street fighter who travels around the world to battle other fighters. This basically means fighting ten different opponents over five suitably-drawn backdrops, representing Japan, USA, England, China and Thailand. The first four can be played in any order, with Thailand (having the two top fighters) being the last port of call.

At the start, the player chooses a location for his first fight, and is whisked away to commence battle. The two opponents face one another and have to knock points off each other's health meters by punching and kicking. When a fighter's bar is completely drained, his opponent wins. Each fight is the best of three bouts, and if the player wins he



Street Fighting's never been so easy. ►

RAY

C+VG HIT!

appear on every screen and attack ground installations by hovering over the target and draining all its energy. If the Lander isn't shot before its deed is done, the installation is either destroyed, or is 'perverted' and becomes hostile. If all eight installations are destroyed, the game ends.

Other aliens include Bombers, Krellian Motherships (pods that split open and release tiny green ships), Blue Hunters (which appear if the player takes too lond to complete a screen), Living Crystals, Siliucon Worms and Radar Interference Satellites (shoot one and the radar screen is blacked out for some seconds – at great inconvenience), amongst many others.

Highscore fiends will be pleased to know that top scores are automatically saved to disk, and there's also a 'last game option' which allows a current game to be saved and continued at another time.

StarRay is by far the best pure blaster yet produced on 16-bit. It's slick and beautifully presented. Vivid parallax-scrolling backdrops and crisp sprites give a staggering visual effect, the sampled sound effects are stunning and the gameplay is fast and furious and really gets the adrenalin flowing!

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	9
► OVERALL	8

UPDATE . . .

Steve Bak, author of *Return to Genesis*, *Leathernecks* and *Goldrunner* is currently working on the Atari ST conversion, so hopes are pretty high – the scrolling should be pretty good if the year-old *Return to Genesis* is anything to go by.

Both the C64 and IBM PC versions will obviously lose out on the graphics stakes compared with the ST and Amiga, but Logotron hopes to retain all the thrills and playability of the 16-bit versions.



▲ *Blue Moon . . .*



▲ *Destroy that Airbus for a bonus.*

goes on to tackle the next fighter. Lose and it's game over.

When a country's two fighters have been defeated, a bonus round is played where the fighter smashes a pile of concrete blocks. At the top of the screen is a rapidly-fluctuating energy bar. The player has to stop it at its peak by a carefully-timed press of the fire button to give the fighter as much strength as possible.

When I saw screenshots of the 16-bit versions, I was expecting great things – the sprites and backdrops looked almost identical to the coin-op. However, all expectations were dashed as soon as they started moving. Although the sprites are nicely drawn, the animation on both the Amiga and ST is apallingly bad, with huge gaps between frames resulting in a spasmodic and totally unrealistic effect. The fighters mince about in a very un-macho fashion and the backdrops jerk rather than scroll.

That could be forgiven if the game was fun – but no. Either GO! has grossly underestimated the ability of the average games player, or didn't bother to playtest the game. *Street Fighter* is unbelievably easy – especially when you discover that the crouching punch (accessed by pressing fire and moving the joystick diagonally downwards) defeats nine of the ten fighters without them actually being able to touch you!

If you went and put £20 (or £25 if you're an Amiga owner) into a *Street Fighter* coin-op, you'd more than likely be sick of the sight of the machine before you'd used up all your credits – so why spend that much of an unchallenging and incompetent computer version which has no lasting appeal whatsoever?

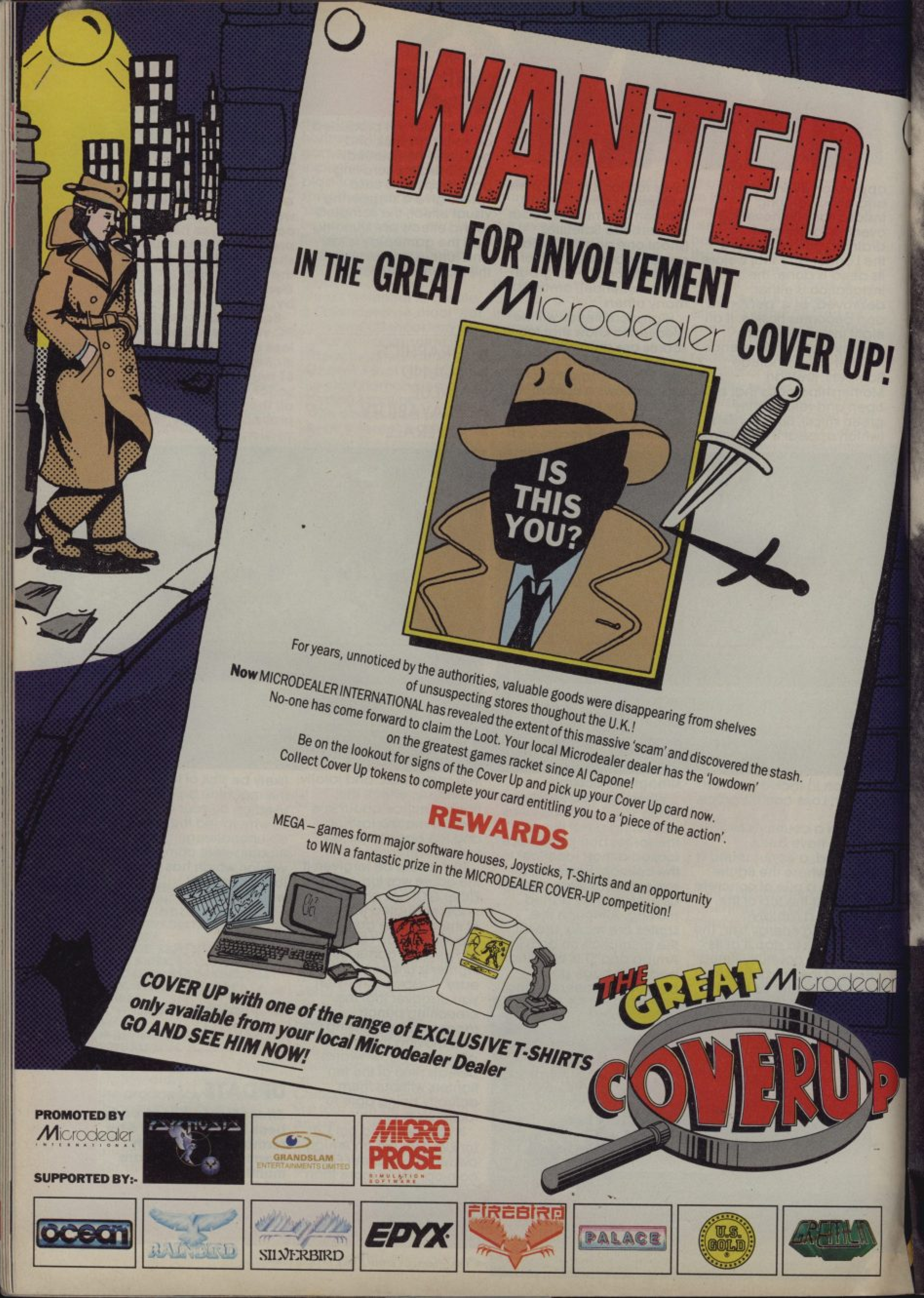


◄ *The infamous crouch kick in operation.*

► GRAPHICS	5
► SOUND	4
► VALUE	1
► PLAYABILITY	2
► OVERALL	2

UPDATE . . .

***Street Fighter* has already been released on all 8-bit formats to a generally warm reception. All are multiloads.**


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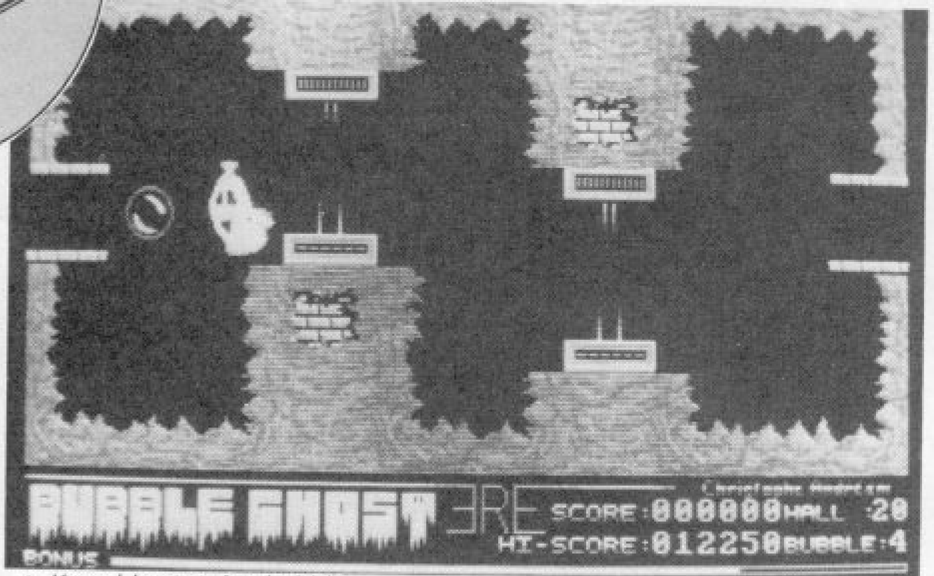
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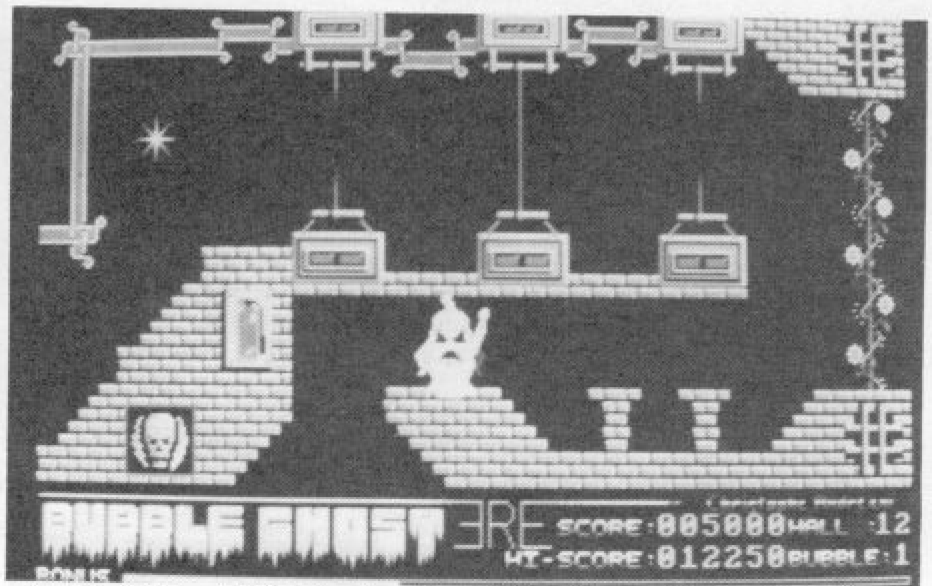
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BUBBLE GHOST



▲ *Keep blowing that bubble.*



▲ *Oh, dear . . . you've burst another bubble.*

► SUPPLIER: ERE INFORMATIQUE.
► MACHINES: ATARI ST, AMIGA, AMSTRAD, IBM PC, C64, APPLE II.
► PRICES: ST £19.95, C64, APPROX £8.95.
► VERSION TESTED: AMIGA.
► REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.

Bubble Ghost is a delightfully cute and highly original little game from the French computer company Ere Informatique.

Poor old Bubble Ghost has his soul trapped within a bubble, and the only way to free it is to guide the floating sphere to the exit of the maze of screens where he is currently trapped. Since he's a ghost, he can't physically touch the bubble, and instead has to blow it to the exit of each screen. The ghost can move anywhere on-screen – even through objects – and rotates when the left or right mouse buttons are pressed. Space bar makes the ghost blow, and the bubble bobbles slowly across the screen in the direction it's blown. If the bubble bobbles slowly across the screen in the direction it's blown. If the bubble hits an object or the wall of the screen it pops, losing one of five lives, much to the annoyance of the ghost, who turns to face out of the screen and berates the player!

Blowing too much causes the ghost to cough – and he really does cough – while the bubble floats on uncontrollably.

There's a time limit to each screen, and if the bubble is blown out of the exit before the unit expires, the time remaining is converted into bonus points. Take too long and no points are awarded.

As the ghost progresses through the maze, screens get harder and harder to negotiate, with spikes, pulsating objects and tiny gaps providing plenty of hassle. The game finishes when the bubble has been blown through all 40 screens or all lives are lost. Just in case you never get that far, there's a useful option which allows you to practice any of the game's screens.

It's great to have a little originality every now and then, and *Bubble Ghost* is like a breath of fresh air. It's an exceedingly cute game, and the ghost sprite is really appealing. The animation is superb, especially when he's annoyed or is out of breath. The background graphics are a little unimaginative and plain, although you don't have much time to hang around and gawp at the scenery!

The sound effects are sparse, but effective. The blowing and coughing noises are brilliant, and there's an amazing title tune, which has some incredible voices.

The most imprtant thing is playability – and *Bubble Ghost* has plenty. Blowing the bubble around trying to avoid the myriad of obstacles is an engrossing and thoroughly enjoyable; I found myself constantly sneaking back to the Amiga for 'just one more go'.

The only disappointing aspect is that it only has 40 screens. Although it does get very tough later on, requiring skill and planning to unsuccessfully blow the bubble to the exit. The practice mode is a good idea, and allows the player to attempt screens that he may never see.

Bubble Ghost is a neat little game; the appeal may wane after a while, but until then you'll be forever blowing bubbles!

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	7
► OVERALL	7

UPDATE . . .

Bubble Ghost is available across most computer formats, although as many shops seem only to be stocking ST and a couple of other popular formats you may have to order it. We've seen the Amstrad and it plays almost identically – the only differences being graphical. This should be the case with all formats.

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Reviews

TRACERS

- ► **MACHINES: AMIGA.**
- ► **SUPPLIER: MICROILLUSIONS.**
- ► **PRICE: £24.99.**
- ► **VERSION TESTED: AMIGA.**
- ► **REVIEWER: MATT BIELBY.**

Tracers is TRON, the light-bike race centerpiece of the early '80s computer generated "sensation", put back where it always really belonged.

You'll remember the scene: Jeff Bridges in a glowing blue jumpsuit bending onto all fours and moulding into his bike, forced to race at breakneck speed through the tightest obstacles, the sharpest turns, always aware of the dangers of the solid wall left in his opponent's wake. It was a great chase and a beautifully simple idea for a game.

The first point in *Tracers'* favour is the manual. The nine-page introductory story is actually quite readable, if understandably vague about a future world where drafted police recruits actually serve a useful function chasing computerised thugs over a grid system. The enemy hits a side wall, a "restricted access node" or, more likely, your solid "tail" and his program crashes, momenterally revealing his physical whereabouts so ground crews can rush over and pick him up. Should the hacker force you, as a Tracer or protector of the computer system to similarly crash, you get a psychic feedback that could fry your brain.

One of the nice things is the number of options available to you. Not only do you get the choice between various scenarios, out between different tunes to accompany them. The simplest option is a simple one on one chase between you and a data thief. Your starting location is indicated by a gold square on the grid; your opponent's by a smaller green one. Suddenly, you're away, each racing along, trying to block the other into a small space or force him into the wall.

Since your speeds are equal, it is strategy that makes the grade, the most important thing being to realise that it is lengthening your survival time that counts. The chances are that he'll make a mistake – some of these data thieves seem less smart than others and have a habit of driving straight into a wall – so be sure to always leave yourself a way out. There are no brakes! You have an accelerator that gives you a momentary speed advantage over the other man, though, and if used sparingly a few seconds use to get in front of him then cut him off can be all it takes to win.

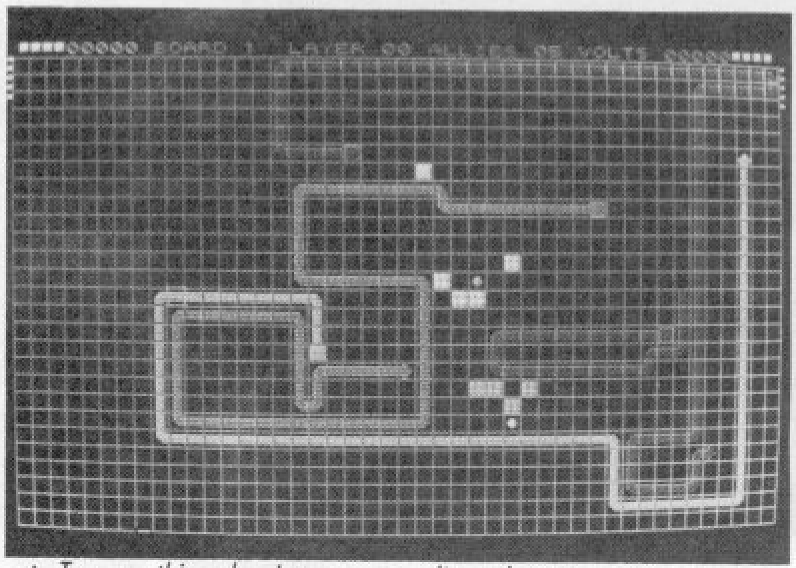
The further you get into the game, the more streets and buildings appear to complicate your path, givng the opportunity to block him down a side alley, but equally making things a good deal more dangerous for yourself, you can trap yourself with your own wall too, though there is a wandering gate on your otherwise solid path, which can give you an exit if you hit it right. Extra points are gained by successfully crossing your own tail in this way, by picking up circular tokens (unfortunately often placed near walls) and collecting fuel nodes.

Alternatively, you can play a game where your mate plays another racer, usually against a few more villains so the screen soon becomes a tangled maze of trails: a set up as likely to have you crashing into each other as trap the bad buys.

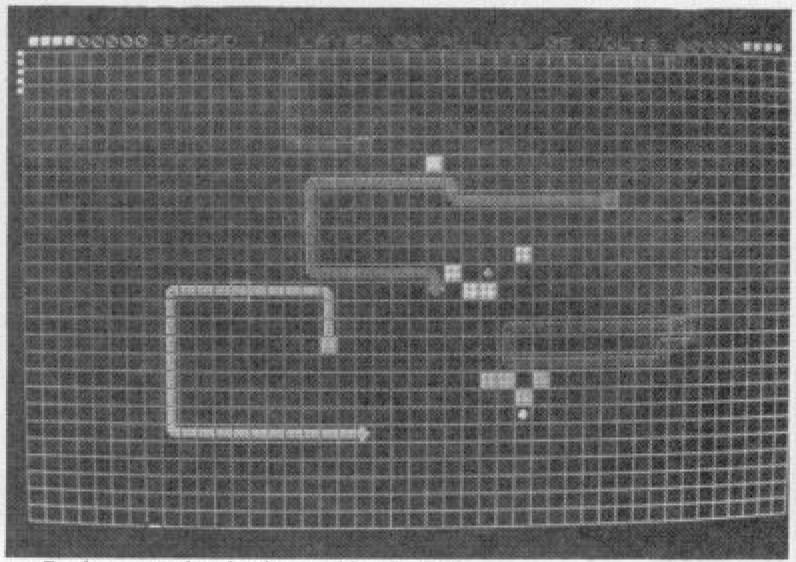
Problems with the game are limited, but you may find them important. Despite the cleaness of the graphics you may find them a bit limited and boring; Amiga owners aren't too used to coping with this repetition.

The last little reservation I found the more annoying: the fact that the joystick control seems ever so slightly inprecise. I tried it with three different sticks, and couldn't rival the responses of the computer's own player. Maybe I've just got the reactions of a donkey.

Still, *Tracers* is an atmospheric, nicely produced and packaged game: one that pushes foreward no boundaries – especially graphically – but which offers playability in spades. I'll come back to it once in a while, I think, and there are plenty around I can't say that about. It might even inspire a trip down the video shop, just to see if they've got TRON lurking on a back shelf somewhere.



▲ *Tracers: things begin to get complicated.*



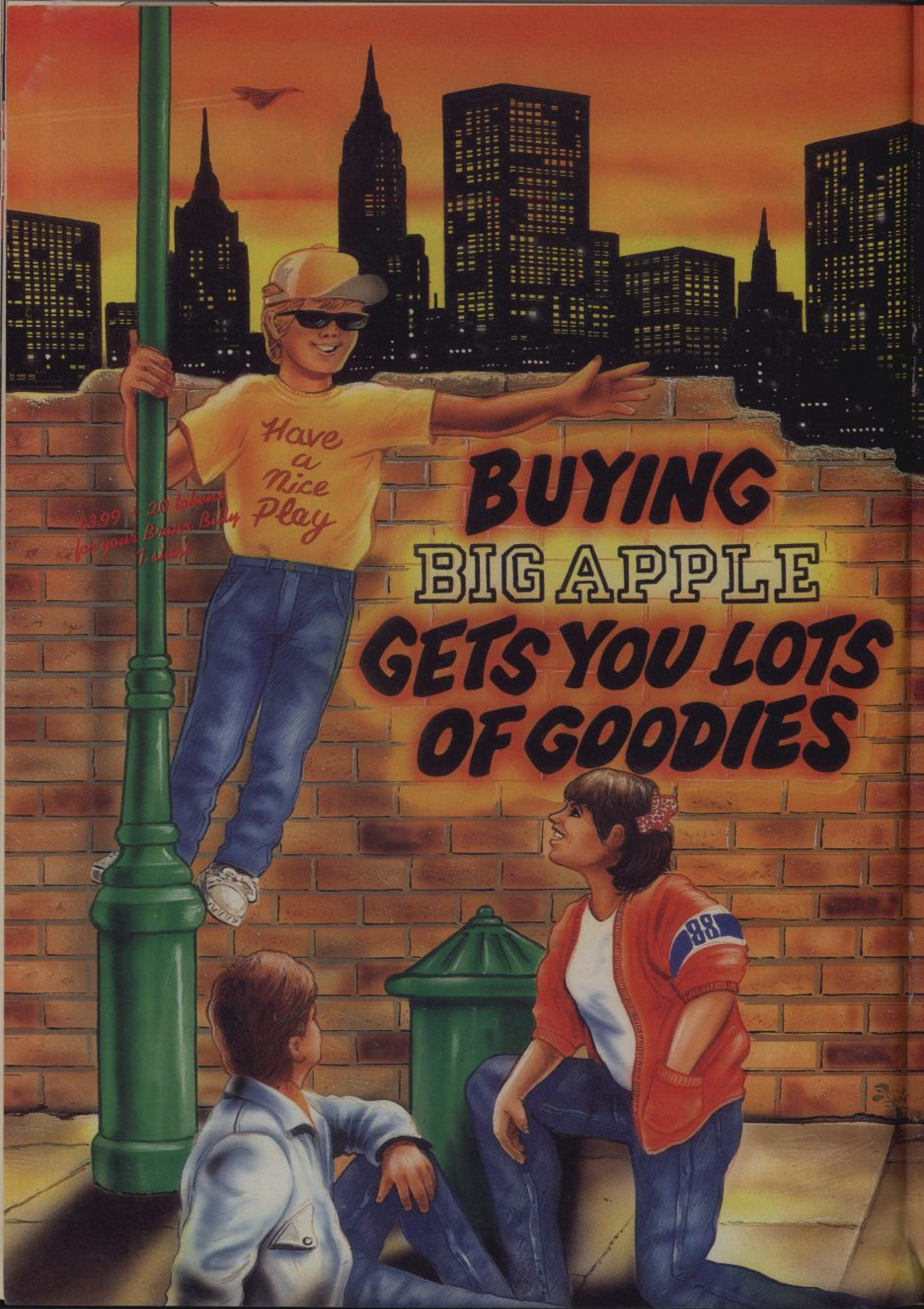
▲ *Each screenshot looks just like the last . . .*

► GRAPHICS	6
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	5
► PLAYABILITY	7
► OVERALL	7

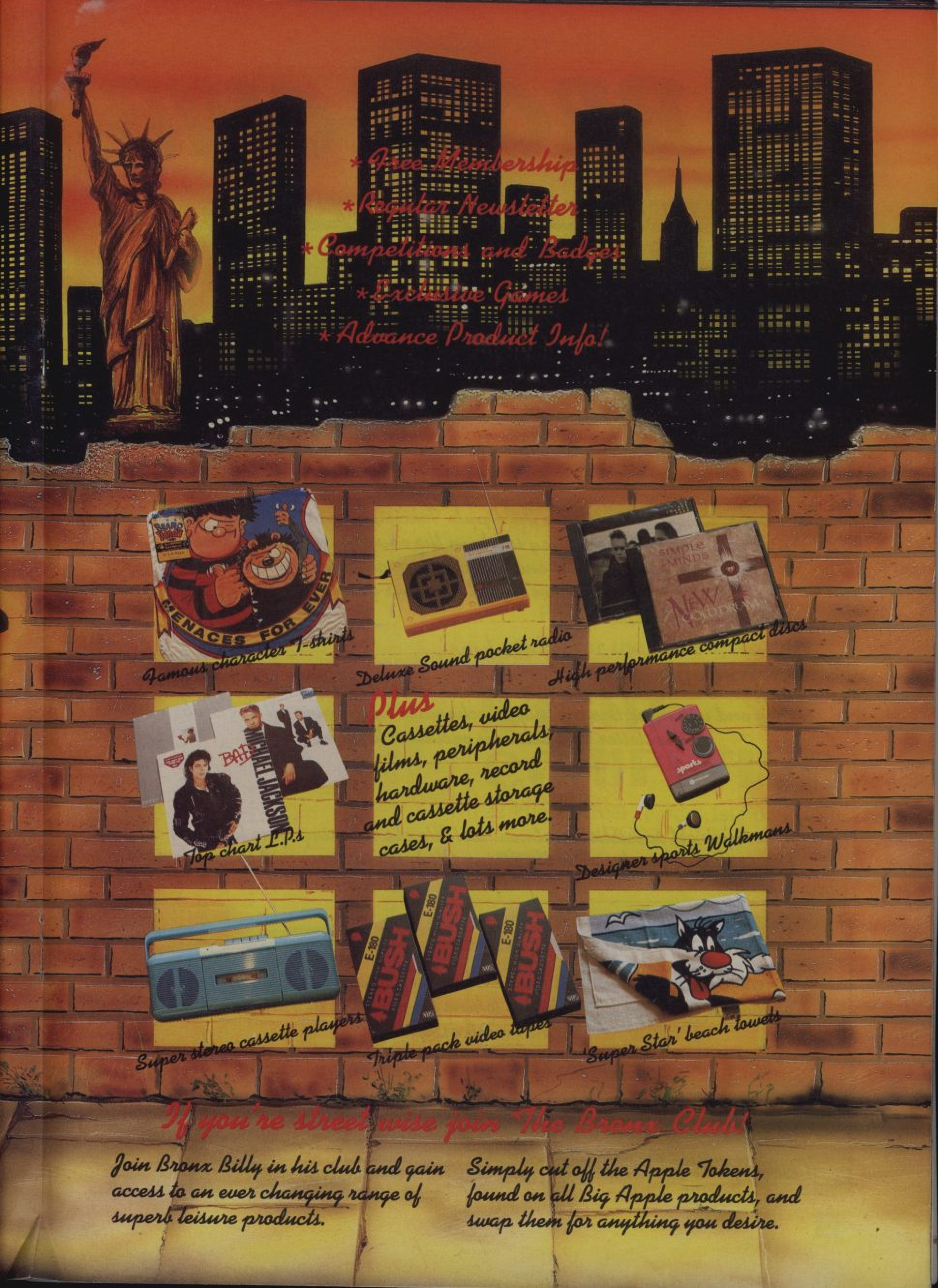
UPDATE . . .

Microillusions have never been very big on ST or 8 bit, and with nothing on Mediagenic (Activision) release schedules, we'd be very surprised to see Tracers on any other format.


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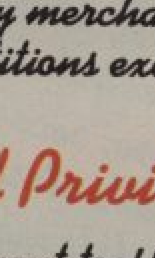
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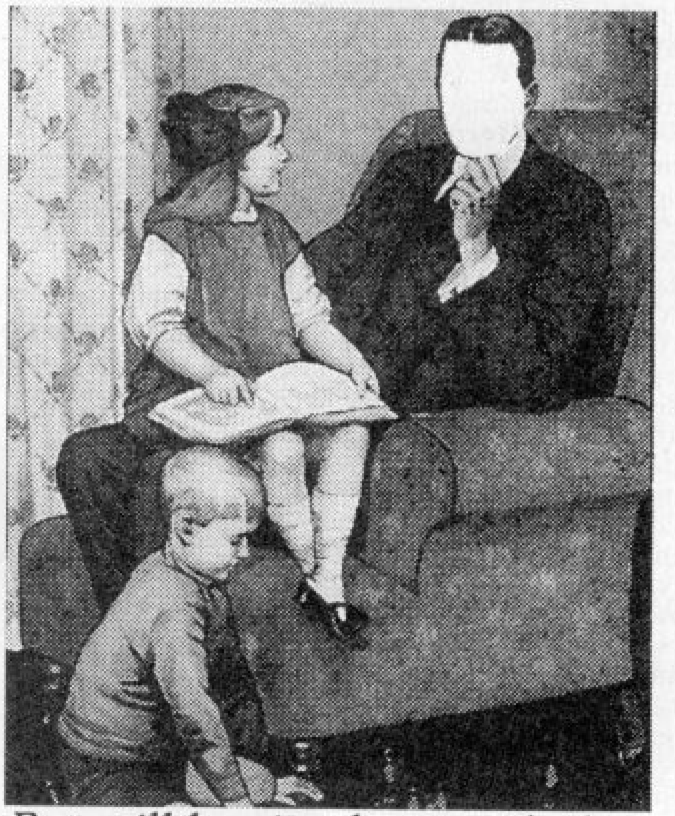
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BIG Screen

You're in the army now ... as Ward R Street signs up for another tour of duty reviewing the latest movie releases. 'Ten-shun'!

I doubt many Armed Forces Radio DJs have won medals, but if anyone ever deserved one, it's Adrian Cronauer. He's fast talking, irreverent wacky – a bit like a *funny* version of Steve Wright, and nothing raises morale than his cry of **Good Morning, Vietnam** (15). This a 'Nam movie with a difference. Instead of machine guns there's motormouth Robin Williams and you'll feel like you've been bombed by the Viet Cong when he launches a barrage of inspired nonsense at the microphone.

But not everyone is a Cronauer fan. His commanding officer, Lt Hauk, knows what funny means – he read it in the army manuals – so when Cronauer tries to read all the news instead of just the censored bulletins normally sent to the boys in the field, the excrement really hits the Expelair.

While *Good Morning, Vietnam* never gets deep below the surface of 'Nam, it does cast a new perspective as Williams/Cronauer loses his innocence and humour turns to tears, Barry Levinson, of *Tin Men* fame, has directed another brilliantly funny film, so tune in and laugh till you weep.

Sly Stallone doesn't take time off from killing commies to laugh in **Rambo III** (18). His only jokes are the macho quips he makes to Colonel Trautman, who's stupidly got himself captured by those evil, sadistic, woman-beating, child eating commies in Afghanistan. Why they're an evil empire and ...

What, they've withdrawn from their ignoble war rather faster than the Americans got out of Vietnam. Whoops! Maybe that's why they rushed *Rambo* out in Britain, with barely time for monthly magazines to review it. It couldn't be because Sly didn't want us to say nasty things about his latest adventure, could it? Well, it won't stop me, **Rambo III** is so flimsy it looks like it's made from cardboard and the gung-ho anti-soviet stance will make anyone who's not a card-carrying member of the CIA puke. Don't waste time or money on this mission.

Big Arnie's new outing,



▲ *Robin Williams star in Good Morning, Vietnam.*

The Running Man (18), is every bit as violent and also rather disappointing, but at least its not an advertisement for Reaganite politics. The problem is that you keep seeing similarities with other films, such as *Robocop, Rollerball* and *Blade Runner* – and thinking that they did it better.

As Richards, Arnie flies a law enforcement helicopter in a gloomy future with the USA under totalitarian rule. But when he refuses to fire on a group of demonstrators he's framed for the massacre that follows, in which one of his deputies mans the guns, and gets life.

In 2019, the government keeps the starving citizens sedated with televisions and the number one show is **The Running Man,** in which criminals can win their freedom by escaping show biz vigilantes called Stalkers. But audiences are dropping



▲ *Sly proves, yet again, that he can't act his way out of a wet paper bag.*

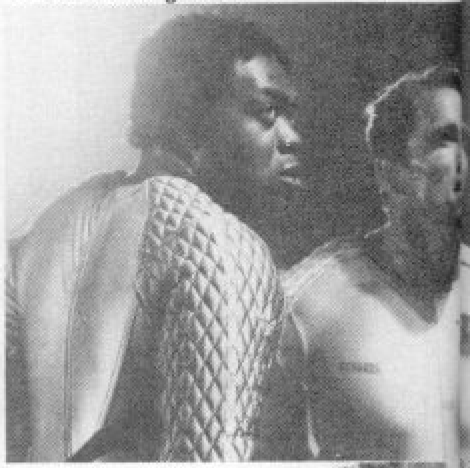
and only one thing can help them – combat to the death by Richards and two allies as they take on the star Stalkers.

The satire on a show which is a combination of It's A Knockout, a Roman arena and The Price is Right is fun – Crimewatch was never like this! But somehow the action never really delivers. Still, there are worse ways to spend 101 minutes and as a computer game is on the way you'll probably want to catch it anyway.

Back in the army, the new recruits are suffering **Biloxi Blues (15).** Biloxi isn't some nasty disease brought on by military catering, but a training camp in steamy Mississippi where, just before the end of the Second World War, the boys are sweating it out under the psychotic glare of Sgt Toomey.

There's not really much plot to Neil Simon's autobiographical screenplay but it is a wonderful, often hilariously comic picture of young men of different types drawn together by conscription. There are various escapades, such as visiting a brothel and falling in love, but mainly this is a comedy of characters and

▼ *The Running Man.*







none is more vivid than Toomey.

As the soft spoken Sergeant with the metal plate in his head, Christopher Walken creates just the right sense of unhinged menace. Matthew Broderick is excellent as the narrator, Eugene, and Corey Parker is wonderful as intellectual geek Epstein. If you've ever thought of enlisting, see this movie – and even if you haven't,

▼ *Pathfinder is a unique and unusual foreign language film.*







◄ *Phil Collins cashes in on Buster.*

watch it to discover how the army turns individuals into obedient soldiers.

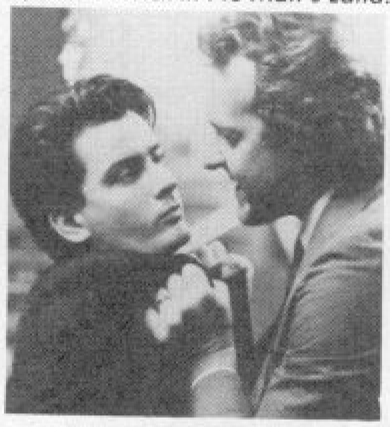
Quite what the military would make of **Jimmy Reardon** (15) is hard to imagine. He's a dreamer, a bit of a rebel, a potential Cassanova, a poet ... most definitely an individual and the events of this movie take place in probably the most important 36 hours of his 17 year-old life!

The year is 1962 and Jimmy has most of the problems that make life so lively – money, parents, girlfriends, and a feeling that his talents are not properly recognised by the world. To stop things becoming boring he's even seduced by his mother's best friend! The bedroom sequence between River Phoenix, so sweet and innocent in *Stand By Me*, and Ann Magnuson, from the underrated *Making Mr Right*, is a real eye-opener.

But this tale of teenage hustling is not another *Lemon Popsicle*. Writer/director William Richert's attention to detail and obvious fondness for his characters mean that *Jimmy Reardon* captures the spirit of sixties teen dreams with the crystal clarity in a night to remember.

Teenagers in 1945, teenagers in 1962 – whatever next? What about a teenager 1,000 years ago, living in the icy wastes of the frozen north. That's the unique unusual setting for **Pathfinder** (15), the first film in the Lapp language ... but don't worry, there are subtitles and plenty of action if you can't be bothered to read them.

◄ *Jimmy Reardon. Charlie Sheen as bad rich kid*
▼ *Ted Varrick in No Man's Land.*



▼ *Frantic – a kidnap yarn.*



BIG Screen

I confess I had reservations about such an obscure sounding movie but it's the most amazing action story. 16 year old Aigin takes on the black-clad, nomadic raiders, the Tchude, when they slaughter his family. With bow and arrow bear hunts, flights on skis, treachrous mountain passes and a mystical white reindeer, every adventurer should seek out this path into another world.

Back to civilization with Harrison Ford, not that his working holiday in Paris is peaceful. In fact it's quite **Frantic** (15), because no sooner has he recovered from his jet-lag than his wife has gone missing, kidnapped for no real reason.

Ford soon discovers that his wife picked up the wrong suitcases at the airport and a keyring and box of matches may be a clue to her abduction. But as les flics and the American Embassy seem unwilling to do anything constructive, he sets out on the trail himself, moving from seedy nightclubs to the famous rooftops of Paris.

Along the way he picks up Polanski's latest discovery, a young lady by the name of Emmanuelle Seigner, and for a moment I wondered why he didn't forget his wife, who looks rather like Nancy Reagan, and settle for this Gallic delight instead? But **Frantic** is far too fast paced for such heretical doubts to linger long.

For home grown thrills, based on fact, travel back twenty five years to when a gang of criminals shocked the country by holding up a mail train and making off with the biggest haul in British criminal history. The crime is still known as The Great Train robbery and the names of the perpetrators remain famous, including Ronnie Biggs and **Buster** (15).

Buster was Buster Edwards, who managed to elude the police and escape to Mexico, only to find that life in paradise wasn't all it was cracked up to be, so he returned home to give himself up. Sensibly the film doesn't just recreate the robbery but follows Buster and his wife as they suddenly become fabulously rich and internationally notorious.

Phil Collins' performance is a nice blend of comedy and sadness, as he discovers that he can't adjust to the jet-setting life. He's brilliantly balanced by Julie Walters as June, his missus, longing for her home in the Smoke. There's also a nice portrait of the establishment, rocked by the Profumo sex scandal (also being turned into a film) and out for Buster's blood by way of revenge.

But though the picture is enjoyable, it does neglect one fact – the train's driver was coshed unconscious and spent the rest of his shortened life with severe brain damage. Remember that before you turn Buster into a hero, please.

Trains aren't the only form of transport susceptible to crime. **No Man's Land** (15) is about Benjy, a rookie cop who goes undercover to uncover a gang of yuppie car thieves specialising in those high powered, roller skate look-alikes, Porsches.

He soon discovers that the gang is led by a bored rich kid, Ted Varrick, who possesses a high octane charisma. Pretty soon police practices are blurred as Benjy starts to take pleasure in heisting Porsches from underground garages. Then another gang takes offence at Ted's techniques.

If all this suggests car chases, you're not wrong, but there's also an interesting relationship between the two young men. This lifts it above the mundane but not quite high enough in a month of good films. Not a Porsche but better than an Escort.

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FANTASY

Thanks for all the FRP mail, it's great to see so many people getting into the hobby. If you've got a comment about FRP to make, don't be shy, let me know! This month's column contains the latest solo role playing book written by Joe dever, a review of Games Workshop's RPG Dracula, plus all the latest news and gossip. Read on!!!

The Fury of Dracula

► SUPPLIER: GAMES WORKSHOP.
► PRODUCED BY: GAMES WORKSHOP.
► PRICE: £14.95.
► COMPLEXITY: BEGINNER UPWARDS.
► REVIEWER: WAYNE B. GAMER.

I can honestly put my hand on my heart when I say that this is the best board Games Workshop has ever released. It is really tremendous and the company will have to go some way to beat this little masterpiece with their future releases. It has been out for a short while and has not honestly received the acclaim it deserves.

The game lets you become Dracula for a few hours, whilst your friends become his adversaries, Lord Godalming, Dr Stewart and the notorious vampire hunter, Van Helsing.

There are two ways to win. For Van Helsing and his associates winning means killing Dracula, or trapping him in his castle for a certain period of time, whilst victory for Dracula means creating a certain amount of vampires or killing key members of Van Helsing's party.

However, before the party can kill Dracula, they must find him.

There are two boards, one large and one small, both represent the whole of Europe circa 1890. Van Hesling's party must openly show their moves on the large board, while Dracula moves on the small board, which is concealed behind a special screen. This is meant to represent the powers of Dracula's information network, plus his special powers. However, whatever city Dracula enters, he leaves behind him speculation in the form of rumours. So when an Adventurer enters the town, he will undoubtly find out and know that he is hot on Dracula's tail.

Hovever, rumours are not the only thing Dracula leaves behind. Sometimes he leaves nasty encounters which can range from a plague of hungry rats to one of Dracula's undead vampire servants.

The game does take a bit of setting up initially, but once you have done this a few times it becomes easy enough. Basically, dracula runs the game from behind his screen, with his small map in front of him and his encounter chits on either side. The players sit at the other end of the table in reach of the large map. They have their "playsheets" ready to hand.

Combat involving Dracula is a bit sticky at first, but once again becomes routine after practice. First of all you have to determine if the combat takes place in day opr night. Then you secretly pick your weapon or ability that you wish to use, then you roll for initiative. Once this is decided, you can then check the relevant table and cross reference the weapons/abilities for a result. This can be anything from killing Dracula outright to seriously wounding humans.

My sole criticism of the game lies here. If you win the initiative against Dracula in the day time and use a stake, Dracula automatically dies as he has no defence!! This is OK if you want to stick to the legend, but in a game it has bad effects. I was killed as Dracula quite a few times within a few minutes play because of this. Furthermore, if Dracula catches an adventurer unawares at nightime, he does not kill them, he merely wounds them. This is an additional burden to the already overworked Dracula player.

This criticism aside, the game moves along at a moderately fast pace, but the suspense is there all the time. It is the thrill of being on Dracula's tail, or the tense excitement of eluding your pursuers, depending on what side you are on, that makes the game. It is full of close shaves, red herrings, tactics, strategy and forward planning.

The whole game was designed by Steven Hand and brilliantly illustrated by Colin Dixon (the board) and Dave Andrews (the counters). You get an phenomenal amount for your money including the two aforementioned full colour boards depicting Europe, a strategy and movement chart plus screen, a combat action board, a large sheet of full colour counters, a deck of 60 event cards, three hunter playsheets. Two six sided dice, a detailed 20 page rulebook, with pull out reference section and four metal figures (in certain editions).

The boxes with the metal figures are well worth looking out for as they are well detailed, nicely cast and add character to the game.

I would unhesitatingly recommend this game to beginners and experienced players alike. It will provide hours of fun, suspense and terror for all who play.

► PLAYABILITY	10
► COMPLEXITY	6
► DESIGN	9
► VALUE	10



▲ *The Fury of Dracula is a very well produced game.*

RoLe PLAyINg

Highway Holocaust

► **CREATED BY: JOE DEVER.**
► **PRODUCED BY: BEAVER BOOKS.**
► **SUPPLIED BY: GAMES OF LIVERPOOL.**
► **PRICE: £2.50.**
► **COMPLEXITY: BEGINNER UPWARDS.**
► **REVIEWER: WAYNE B. GAMER.**

Highway Holocaust is the first solo role playing book in the new *Freeway Warrior* series, by Joe Dever.

Dever will be a familiar name to those of you out there who like book role playing. Over the years he has one many various awards for his books, the most famous of which was for his *Lone Wolf* adventures.

In this new release, you play the part of Cal Phoenix, a young man who has spent eight years living in an underground complex with his aunt and uncle. The reason for this is that HAVOC – The Hijack, Assasination and Violent Opposition Consortium – an organisation consisting of political terrorists who are funded by organised crime, has managed to cause total nuclear devastation.

HAVOC achieved this by hijacking a train containing seventeen 100-Kiloton warheads and then holding the world to ransom for a staggering $2 trillion in gold bullion. Of course, the world leaders "won't give in to terrorism" (haven't I read that somewhere before?) and they immediately give orders to destroy HAVOC's HQ, which is based on a unmapped island in the Pacific Ocean.

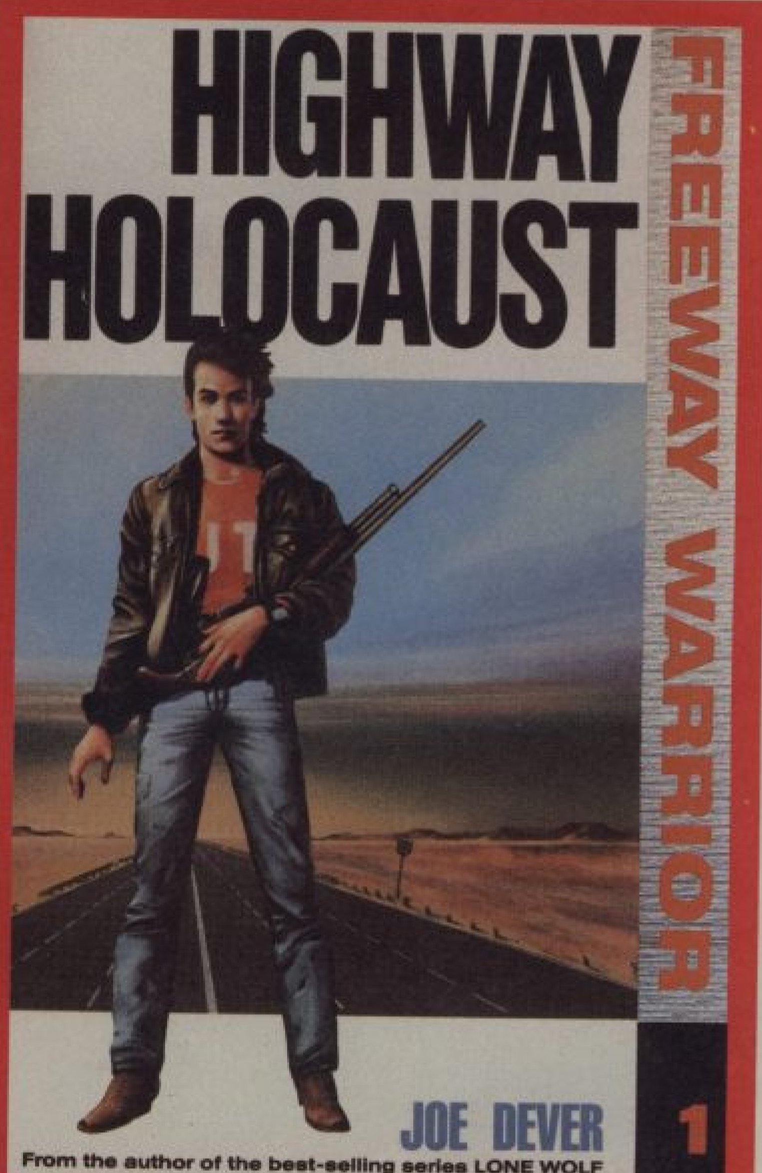
However, whilst the leaders of all the world's major nations are sipping their celebratory champayne, HAVOC enact their ultimate revenge. A transmitter hidden on their island, which is fitted with a time delay mechanism, clicks on, sending a high frequency radio signal to a communications satellite orbiting the earth. The satellite amplifies the signal, shoots it back to earth and detonates all the hidden nuclear warheads.

At the time the bombs detonated, you were lucky (!) enough to be visiting your uncle's oil refinery in Texas. He and your aunt take you on a trip down his mine and whilst there, the bombs exploded trapping you there for the aforementioned eight years.

Finally, in the year 2020AD, you manage to dig yourself out to discover the nightmare that the bombs left behind.

It is easy to believe that the three of you are the last survivors on earth, but after messing about with a radio set, you manage to ascertain that there are other groups of survivors scattered around the countryside. You manage to team up with the people in a small settlement called "DCI" and all seems safe for a while. You learn how to shoot, repair motor vehicles and drive. It is your prowess with a gun and your skill behind a wheel that earns you the name *Freeway Warrior.*

After a few years, DCI gets increasingly frequent reports that the large gangs of bikers, hooligans and pschopaths, that are known to be roaming the countryside are geting un-nervingly closer every day.



▲ *Joe Dever's Highway Holocaust.*

You are elected scout, because of all the skills you have learned and your task is set – can you help lead your settlement to a new, safer land?

It is inevitable on your journeys that you will get into combat, be it with weapons or on a hand to hand basis. The system for determining the combat results is simple to say the least. All it consists of is the selection of a few random numbers and then comparing them with a combat ration chart in the back of the book. It is fast, fluid and fun!

From the moment I started my adventure as Cal Phoenix, I was totally hooked. I met savage bikers, violent punks and radiation victims. My journey was full of danger, and death lurked around every corner.

If you liked the films *Mad Max, Escape From New York, Bladerunner,* and *The Terminator,* then this adventure book is definitely for you!!

► PLAYABILITY	9
► COMPLEXITY	4
► DESIGN	9
► VALUE	9


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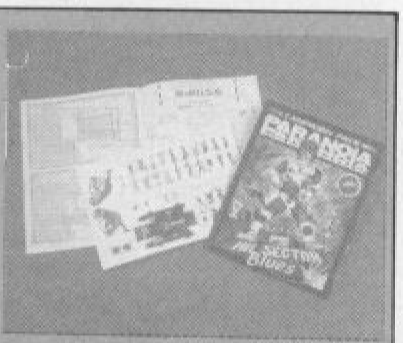
News

● Standard Games has released a booklet of additional scenarios (adventures for their best selling game "Cry Havoc") which is a snip at £1.95. The booklet contains six original scenarios, as well as additional rules for peasants plus hints and tips on using miniature lead figures with all their products. I found the latter of special interest and using figures certainly brings more clarity and detail into the game.

The scenarios have a great medieval flavour to them and my favourite is "The Knight Errant", where a company of mercenary soldiers has been terrorising a village, threatening the inhabitants if they do not pay them in money or in kind!! A wandering Knight, Sir Richard has encouraged the village to stand up to the extortioners and conflict is not short in the offing. Can the mass of the peasants beat the expertise of the mercenaries? Only you can decide.

● The *Paranoia Campaign Pack*, (see Paranoia review this issue) has been out for a little while. However, it has been spotted in several games Workshop stores at a much reduced price. Originally selling at £4.95, I managed to obtain a copy for only £2.99! As any Paranoia player will tell you this is an essential purchase, and will put a lot of life (and death!) in any adventure.

Cheekily Sub titled "Hill Sector Blues" the intro states that this campaign book "departs from the normal Paranoia adventure. Here characters are encouraged to keep each other alive to achieve the mission, rather than assassinate each other at the drop of a hat." The reason for this is because the computer has promoted you to Security level Blue and re-assigned you to the elite Internal security force of HIL Sector.



▲ *Paranoia – only the tough survive.*

If you believe for one minute that working as an Internal Security team you will become friends, then you deserve what you get! As any experienced Paranoia player will tell you, it is hard enough to survive a Paranoia adventure,let alone a campaign.

Survival aside, this pack will assist a GM no end. It has a quick nine stage guide to create the famed "Blue Troopers", loads of colour cardboard cut out counters (cor!), to represent the troopers, various concerned citizens, a blue trooper auto car and a couple of nasty looking dinosaurs!! Of course these are totally superfulous and don't have to be used at all. I would advise letting the players use their imagination, as it would worry them more!!

Overall the adventure is well written in the inimitable Paranoia style. Designer Ken Rolston has pulled out all the stops to create as much madness and mayhem as possible. He has taken manu of the situations and phrases from a well-known American TV police series, and based some of the characters around the actors. It is well written, with loads of gags and cartoons to keep you interested and the artwork by Jim Holloway is just great. Miss this campaign pack at your peril!

Letters

Thanks for all the mail that has been pouring in – it is really appreciated! However, please don't stop as I need to know your views on the FRP scene along with what you like and dislike. To entice you into writing, I will give away a prize to everyone who has a letter printed!! So get to it!

● Wayne, I know that D + D means Dungeons and Dragons and AD + D means Advanced Dungeon and Dragons, but I don't know the differences between them! Can you please explain as I would like to buy one of them?"
Peter Powditch
London

Phew, a tall order for a column with as limited space as this!! Basically, D + D is a simple sword and sorcery FRP game, which ignores a lot of real life facts. It is based on fun and is easy to play, with few complications to hinder it. It is also aimed at a younger market.

AD + D is a different game altogether from D + D although it is set in the same background. It is quite complicated, fairly intricate and involves a lot of reading. Let me give you an example of the differences. In D + D if you wanted to hit the monster with your sword all you would do is roll a dice to see if you hit it. In AD + D you would have to see if you have the space to wield your weapon, work out how many attacks you may need before you start swinging. My advice is try D + D first to see if you like it.

● I have seen you review some games which are issued by Standard Games, but I can't seem to buy them anywhere. Could you please give me their address so I can order things by post?
Geoff Penn
London

Your wish is my command Geoff. Standard are located at: Arlon House, Station Road, Kings Langley, Herts, WD4 8LF.

Andy Lawson from Liverpool asks;

● Wayne, What are your favourite computer FRP games and what would you recommend for a beginner?
Andy Lawson
Liverpool.

At the moment Andy, I don't believe that there has been a lot of pure FRP games issued to date. A load of them have been expanded adventure games with combat options thrown in. However, things are beginning to change now and without a doubt my favourite FRP computer game is Dungeonmaster *by Mirrorsoft on the ST. It has the combination of everything you could ask for, and I for one am totally addicted to it. It has combat, traps to negotiate and the best magic system I have ever seen. I have spent so many hours on it I have lost count!! Also, I have seen a preview of the AD + D Computer game that is soon to be released by US Gold/SSI. It looks very good and well worth purchasing when it is comercially available. To get into the swing of things try "Legacy of the Ancients" on the trusty old C64 or "Shadowgate" on the Atari ST. The latter is a cross between an adventure and a FRP game.*

Play By Mail

“Busy, busy” is the only [illegible] the PBM scene at the moment, what with the Great Northern PBM Convention shortly taking place and people bombarding me with mail about playtest positions, PBM information, hints, tips and news.

I have been flooded by requests for an update on the KJC special version of “It's A Crime” for C + VG readers. So here it is.

On the gang front, the head honchos as I write are the **Axemen** (737) who have a massive 1913 notoriety points. They are being closely followed by **The Fighting Falcons** (547), who are on 1859; just behind them are the **“Riotous Assembly”** (429), who have a notoriety of 1769. Meanwhile, the one-time leaders **“Lumps Of Green Putty”** (313) have dropped to fourth with 1650 and the aptly named **“Hammers”** (383) have dropped to fifth place. However, this is not a bad achievement for them as they have just split their gang.

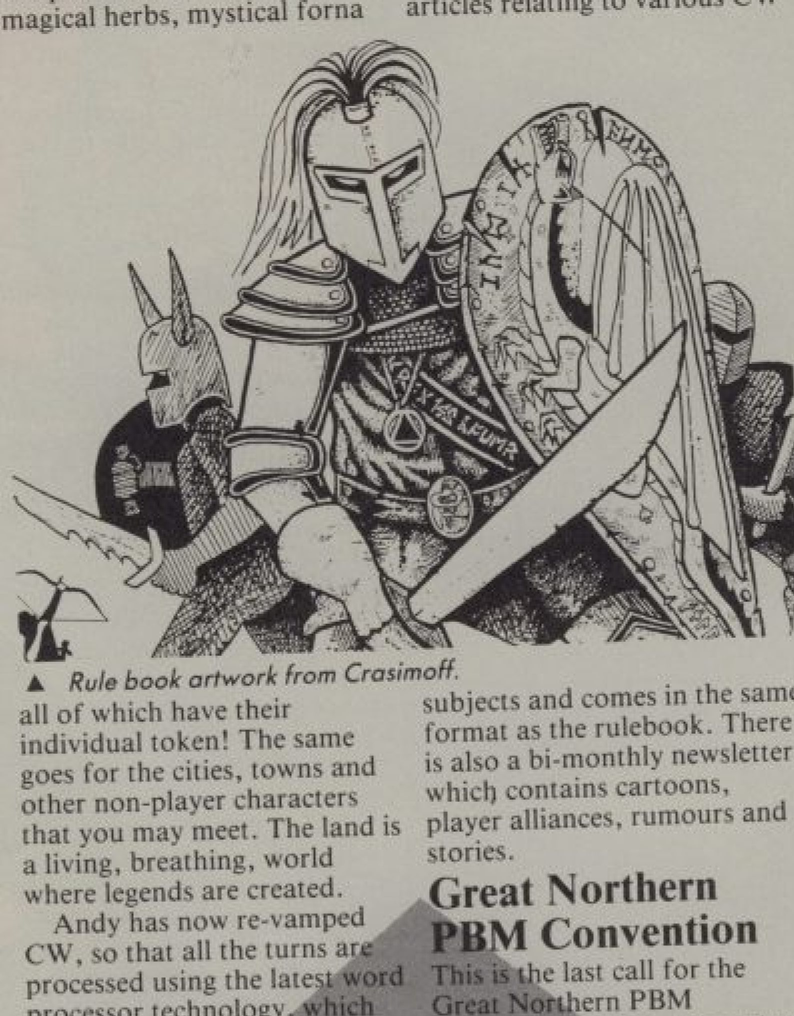
No Mob Boss has yet become Godfather, but things are getting tight. **“The Patonucci Family”** (291) have the most mob businesses, but they are closely followed by **“The Freakato Family”** (446) who are in second spot. On the other hand **The Hedgio Family** (350) have the most loyal gangs, whilst **The Lugenmann** (216) have the most enforcers. The mysterious **“Family”** (433) have suddenly entered the most enforcers lists like a bolt from the blue, and it is clear that this game is not over by a long stretch. More reports to follow next month.

Talking about KJC, you may remember that a couple of months ago I mentioned the fact that they had sold off their longest running game to long-time GM Andy Smith. I am of course talking about. **Crasimoff's World.**

CW was the first PBM I ever tried. I have now been playing it for over eight years and during that time it has seen many other PBMs come and go. Sure, it has been through its bad patches, but it has always seen them through and has now developed into a high presentation, quality game.

CW is a hand moderated sword and sorcery game, set in a mythical fantasy world. You play the part of brave Chieftain, who leads his part of nine trusted companions in search of whatever you deisre.

CW is a world where adventure is only a sword breath away. If you don't look for danger, danger will come to you. There are thousands of unique animals, monsters, magical herbs, mystical forna for insertion in a ring binder. There is also a publication called the “Crasimoff's World Companion” which is produced on a fairly regular basis. It contains histories and articles relating to various CW



▲ *Rule book artwork from Crasimoff.*

all of which have their individual token! The same goes for the cities, towns and other non-player characters that you may meet. The land is a living, breathing, world where legends are created.

Andy has now re-vamped CW, so that all the turns are processed using the latest word processor technology, which means clearly printed A4 sheets. The tokens are now computer printed and amended when something happens to them. For example, if your party made a carving on a tomb wall, for which there was a token, the next party to enter the tomb would receive a new token, with full details of your actions detailed on it.

The long awaited third edition rulebook is now ready. It is now A4 size and is suitable subjects and comes in the same format as the rulebook. There is also a bi-monthly newsletter, which contains cartoons, player alliances, rumours and stories.

Great Northern PBM Convention

This is the last call for the Great Northern PBM Convention, which takes place in Sheffield Poly (Pond Street) opposite the BR station, on 15/10/88 between 10am and 6pm. This is your chance to see some of the big and some of the not-so-big PBM companies, have a go at some free FRP games, get involved with some FREE live role playing, vote in the alternative PBM awards and generally get to know the players and the GMs. If you get bored you can always drown your sorrows in the all-day bar.

[illegible] a miserly £2.00, but C + VG readers can get them even cheaper for £1.50 if they write to; The BPMA, 14 Courtney Road, Holloway, London N7.

All cheques and POs to be made payable to the BPMA.

Spellbinding C + VG Offer

Spellbinder games have come up trumps once again for C + VG readers. They are arranging for a C + VG readers only game with a difference. The difference being prizes. The way the game is structured means they can offer various prizes at various levels. The prizes start off with things like book and record tokens, but will slowly and surely move up to prizes like Role Playing Games, and finally holidays for two abroad!! The terms are just being finally agreed, but I can reveal that the game will be called **Kingdom** and the turns for start off at 50p each! For those of you who don't know what Kingdom is all about, it is a totally computerised PBM that is based on power struggles, diplomacy, tactics and strategy. As in the time old Spellbinder tradition your start up, rule book and first couple of turns will be TOTALLY FREE.

Fanzine Fervour

Here are the details of a few more fanzines for you. PBM Magazine is long established and dedicated soley to PBM. It comes out quarterly in a large format – covering a combination of professional and amateur PBMs with a unique style.

Issue 26 is still available, at the rather expensive price of £1.65.

“Vollmond” is a brand new fanzine, which is not totally dedicated to PBM, as it also covers a wide range of FRP games. It has a PBM column by yours truly and covers all aspects of the gaming world, including a great news section. it is well worth the 70p asking price. Send and SSAE to me and I will tell you how to get them.

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Fish

Exclusive Review

► **SUPPLIER: RAINBIRD/MAGNETIC SCROLLS.**
► **MACHINES: ATARI ST/AMIGA/C64 TURBO-LOAD VERSION TO FOLLOW.**
► **PRICE: £24.50.**
► **REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL.**

It sounds corny, and it's easy to say, but I have to: *Fish* is like no other adventure I've played before. And then again . . . *Fish* is something like bits of *Leather Goddesses, Stationfall, Lurking Horror, Border Zone*, and *The Pawn*, all rolled into one, with a bit of Monty Python thrown in for good measure. Just what sort of game am I talking about?

I'm talking of the fifth game to come from Magnetic Scrolls, and the third one this year! Plotted this time by John Molloy (well known to regular C+VG readers for his contributions a few years back), Pete Kemp, and Phil South, it takes the art of adveturing into a completely new dimension – underwater! And before you say "Underwater – it's been done before!", read on . . .

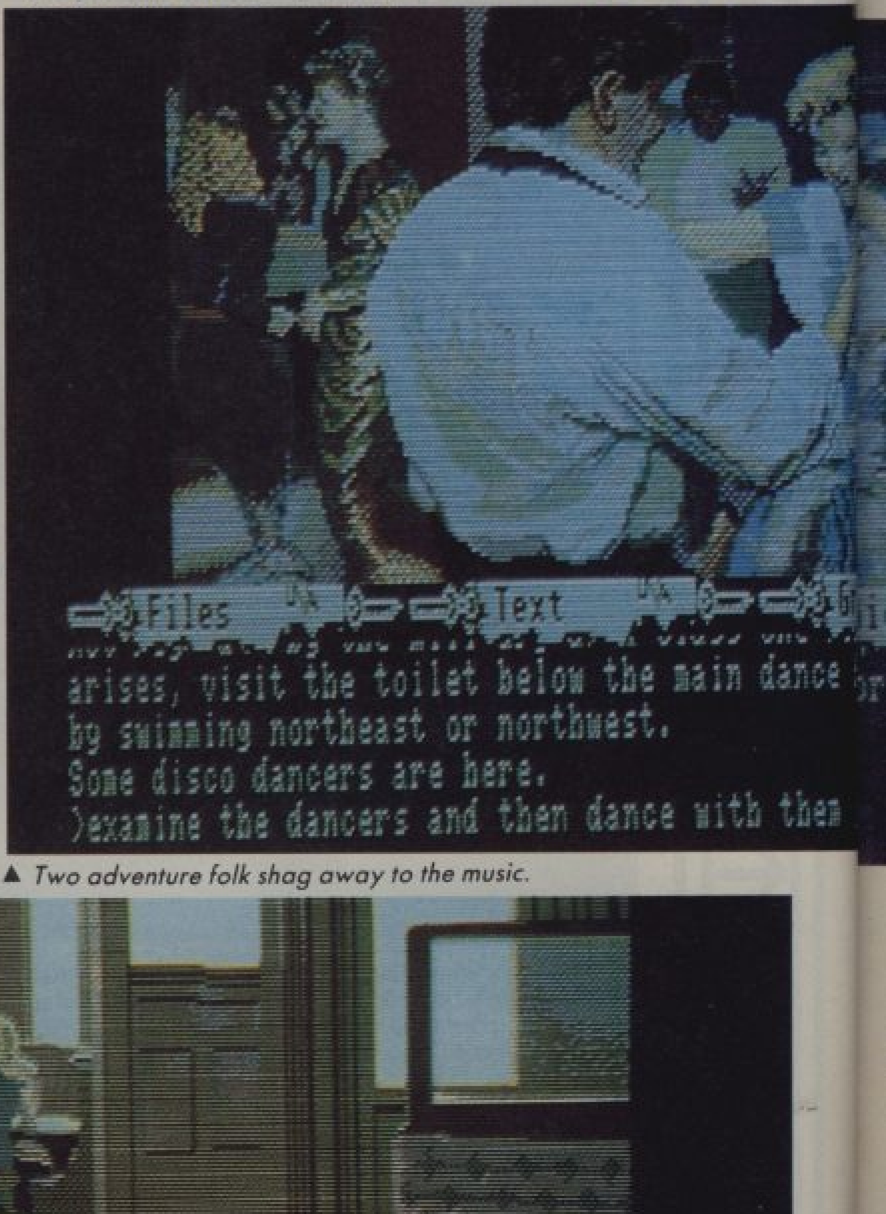
I don't know what it is about fish that makes people go completely pun crazy. I mean think about. Why fish. If someone mentioned cats to you, or dogs, or snakes, you are not going to start making the most awful puns imaginable – are you? Fish though, and it becomes pun city.

Magnetic Scrolls new game doesn't miss the opportunity to become the most pun packed adventure ever.

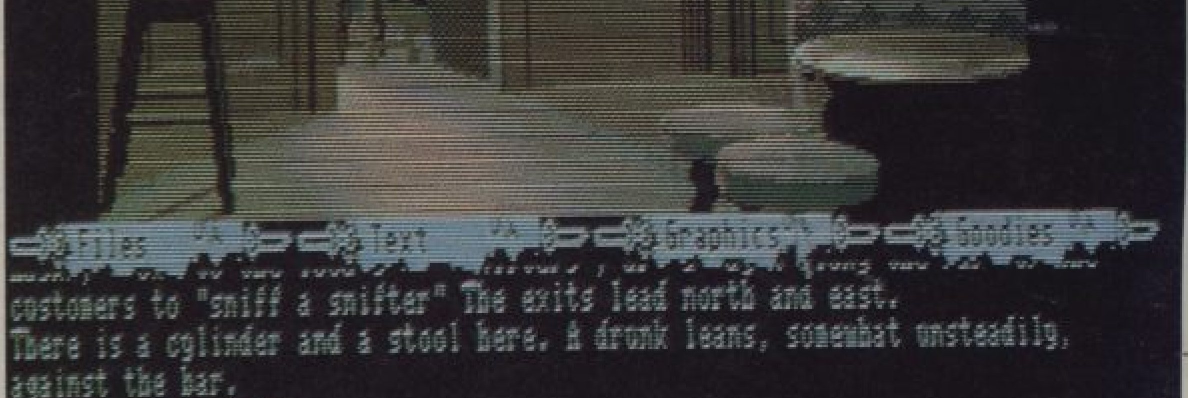
There you are, one ordinary Wednesday morning, happily swimming round your bowl, when suddenly a plastic castle breaks the tranquility of the water in your bowl, knocks the pondweed to one side, and lands on the gravel beneath you. When you've quite got your breath back, you decide to explore the interior of this alien structure that is now occupying the major part of your environment. Snatching a quick ant-egg snack from the the surface, you enter the dark interior with more than just a little apprehension.

Dagon, the god-like inhabitant of the castle, mistakenly believes you to have arrived in answer to an advertisement. Before he is prepared to offer you the job, he insists that you take his aptitude test, and return three keys to him. Facing you are three portals, each leading to a mini adventure. One takes you into a recording studio, famous for its recordings of the group known as the Seven Deadly Fins, another takes you to where a group of hippies are signing round a makeshift fire in a ruined abbey, whilst the third sets you down by a stump in a forest clearing.

No pouch full of colours in this stump, though. Instead, you'll find a little man who is completely off his rocker, jealously guarding a golden disc that commemorates the millionth copy of a Seven Deadly Fins number. This lunatic has his own philosophy for life, for which he thinks he is famous: Get a home, get a bird, and settle down. He has lived by it, too. His best friend is and his exploding homing pigeon that hasn't a clue where to head for.



▲ *Two adventure folk shag away to the music.*



▲ *Nothing fishy about this boozer.*

and is currently sulking in its cage not far away, following a dreadful row between the two. This is an utterly mad adventure, and one that definitely breaks the mould, as I found to my cost just when I thought I was winning!

And so, with the three keys safely retrieved, Damon gives you "the big one" – the task for which he wanted to hire you. It seems that the city of Hydropolis is in danger. Water is evaporating away

▼ *Spooky location – but where are the fish.*





faster than it is being supplied, and the entire fish-world is in danger. A special project has been set up to teleport large quantities of water back – but it seems it has been sabotaged. You find yourself transported into the body of fish-scientist Dr Roach, the man in charge of the project, and you must discover which fish are reposnsible for the dirty deed, stop them, and repair the damage.

There are plenty of suspects. To start with, there's your colleagues on the project: Eric Chubb, Simon Tench, and Bertie Bream. Having been given the day off, you'll find them down at the Hook, Line & Sinker, having a few snifters.

Leaving your apartment (not forgetting your all-important Fishofax) you set off via the underground, for an appointment with the principal of the university. It's rush hour on the tube, and you are jostled by guppies on the way to the city, not to mention the crowds of ordinary pilchards and sardines, as you head towards the famous seat of learning. A little investigation will reveal that a number of key components for the 'device' on which the project depends are out of stock – and a further look round will uncover some likely replacements.

Here is an adventure full of fishy puzzles and puns, (try playing The Prawn, or Gilled of Thieves on the university mainframe . . .) that is guaranteed to produce shoals of laughter as you scratch your scales trying to fathom its depths.

Scrolls really seem to be cleaning up on the adventure scene this year. Mind you, it has to be said they haven't had much competition. With their old enemy Level Nine not producing anything new of late they have had the field to themselves. Then there is Infocom. What's happened to them – no new game since Christmas.



▲ *Meet strange creatures in the land of Fish.*

► VOCABULARY	8
► ATMOSPHERE	9
► PERSONAL	10
► VALUE	9



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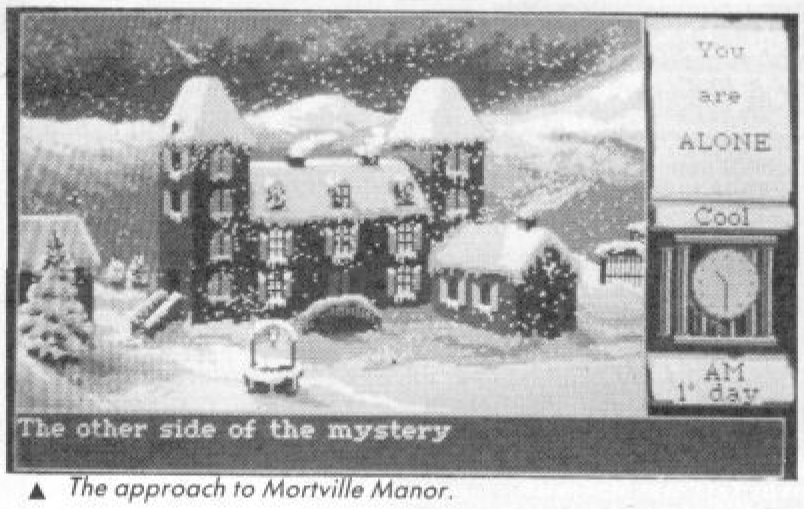
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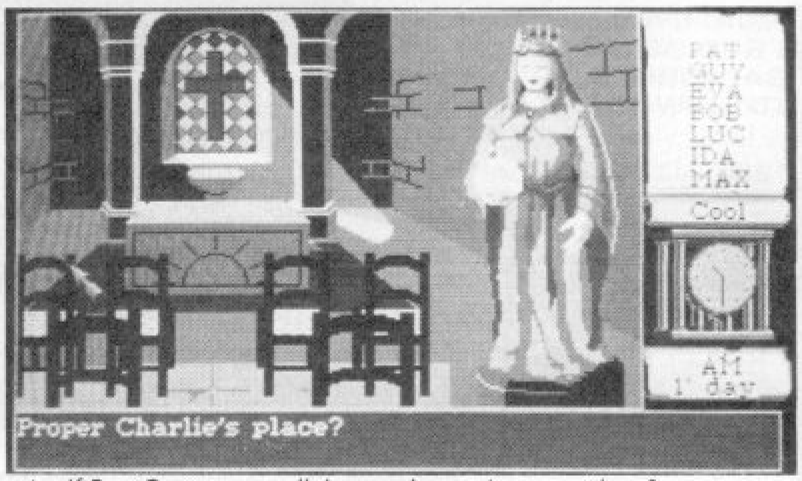
THE ULTIMATE PACK

THE NAME BEHIND THE GREAT GAMES

BEAU-JOLLY



▲ *The approach to Mortville Manor.*



▲ *If Pat, Guy etc are all there, why can't we see them?*

Mortville Manor

► **SUPPLIER: LANKHOR.**
► **MACHINES: ATARI ST, AMIGA, IBM PC VERSION TO FOLLOW.**
► **PRICE: ATARI ST, AMIGA £24.95.**
► **REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL.**

In their approach to adventures, the French have always seemed to me to be utterly illogical and out of touch with the rest of the world. For example, the incredibly doltish and apparently random *Passengers On The Wind*, I wouldn't have bothered to play for more than five minutes if I hadn't had to review it. Why this is the case, and why letters from French readers lag way behind the numbers sent in by their European counterparts, I have no idea.

However, perhaps with Mortville Manor, a new era has begun, for here is a mystery game that has some very nice original features about it, and plays in a logical, if very French manner. It opens with a title screen not far short of Magnetic Scrolls standards and a catchy little loop of digitised music, with superimposed voice singing 'Mortville Manor'. Digitised sound contains all the harmonics in one single channel, to faithfully represent an overall 'sound picture'.

You have received a desperate telegram from Julia Defranck, saying she is very ill and in danger of death, and is very worried for the rest of the family. It is addressed from Mortville Manor, which is where you immediately head for. On your arrival, you find she has already died. What follows is typical detective stuff, in which you gather evidence, and interview members of the family, to piece together the course of events.

The entire game is played through mouse and function keys, with no text entry from the keyboard. The key to this is the menu bar, which offers options and presents a drop-down menu giving a number of further choices, depending on the main option. MOVE, for example, lists the actual places to which you can go directly, and in some cases, where there are multiple exits shown in the picture, allows the selection of 'Choice On Screen'. Following which you click on the appropriate door.

If you choose to DISCUSS, then only the characters present in the current room are highlighted on the drop-down menu. Selecting one produces a close up mug-shot of the character, and offers the choice of subjects for discussion. Again, clicking on one these causes the character shown on screen to issue forth a suitable reply in synthesised speech, with an animated face. Most of the replies are quite comprehensible, although the French accent superimposed on the speech synthesiser does occasionally give rise to a comic effect.

The graphics of the locations are not up to the same standard as the title picture, which is itself a location, and it is somewhat disappointing to find that the characters listed as present in a location are not actually visible.

Overall, this is a well presented intriguing mystery.

► VOCABULARY	7
► ATMOSPHERE	8
► PERSONAL	6
► VALUE	7

The Realm

► **SUPPLIER: D&H GAMES.**
► **MACHINE: SPECTRUM 48K.**
► **PRICE: £9.95.**
► **REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL.**

If you wandered into a lonely cottage and found a wizard, what would you do if he asked you stay behind and guard his spell book whilst he went in search of a missing page, recently stolen by a goblin?

Would you hang around, trusting him to return within a reasonable time, or would you desert your post? I hung around a bit, examined his mouldy carrot, and let his pet fwooble out of its cage, tried reading the book with little success, and after a while, began to seriously wonder whether he would bother to come back. Carefully guarding the book, I thought I would take a stroll outside for a breath of fresh air, and see if I could find him. Ooops! The book was definitely magic, for I was picked up and whisked back inside the cottage again!

The Realm is set in a strange wood, and has monochrome graphics that are mostly passable, in some cases quite detailed. They may be turned on and off with a PIX command.

The parser accepts only two words, and whilst I have always thought of myself as basically a two-word adventurer, having been playing Fish extensively, I found it rather limiting. I wanted to put the fwooble back in its cage, to put the carrot inside the kettle. I began to feel a mite frustrated, not the least due to a not over-endowed vocabulary, until I stopped to think: "If I can't enter a command because it is too complex, then the game does not require it!"

An interesting little adventure that puts the player in quite an original dilemma at the start, and is pleasant to play.

► VOCABULARY	6
► ATMOSPHERE	7
► PERSONAL	7
► VALUE	7

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Helpline

Stuck in an adventure? KC and his crew can help. Adventure Helpline, C+VG, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AV

The perils facing a sweet young girl who asks a friendly stranger back home, have been brought home to Christopher Waite, of Chelmsford. "How do you stop him changing into a werewolf?" he asks, realising too late, that the average man in the street may not turn out to be quite what he seems.

Meanwhile, in the same game, Gareth Edwards cannot beat the monster that is covering the passage leading upwards, near the coffin, past the skeleton, he says. The name of the game, of course, is *Wolfman.*

Back to Christopher, who also wants to know how to disrupt the guards' card game in Rigel's Revenge, and how to escape the crocodiles in Tass Timesa. But there aren't any crocodiles in Tass Times. Christopher – so which is it to be, allidiles or crocogators?

Having trouble with Knight Orc? Richard Archer of 129 Johnson Road, Cannock, Staffs WS11 2BB has maps and solutions he is willing to send you, for the price of a stamped, addressed envelope.

Simon Percival of Wivenhoe, has got all the jewels, and rescued all the heroes in Heroes Of Karn, but can't end the game. Is it a simple matter of typing SCORE, or has he missed someting important along the line?

Miss Thompson cannot tell the difference between a rat and red herring! It's a rat she is trying to get rid of, but has that nagging feeling she may be wasting her time! The answer to this, and the whereabouts of a candle, would be of immense help to her in playing Cloak Of Death on her Atari.

Everyone who has played Scott Adams' classic Pirate Adsventure, will have a bit of know how in the field of boat building. But there are boats and boats, and here we have a potential wreck being built, by one Robert Milton. Anyone who can keep Robert afloat, and who also happens to know the combination of the case, in Lapis Philosophorum, should write in without delay!

Starting the mole digger and finding the map, is exhausting the imagination of Stuart Day of Peterborough. Has anyone enough imagination to help?

Well, so ends yet another year of C+VG and the Adventure column – next month will mark our seventh birthday! Meanwhile, get writing! Let me know of any adventure problems you can't solve, and I'll try to help. Can you yourself help someone who is stuck this month? Or perhaps you've an interesting comment to make on the world of Adventure? Whatever your letter is about, don't forget that each month there is a year's free subscription to the Adventurer's Club Ltd, worth £15, for the sender of the letter I judge to be most worthy of the prize!

And while you're all busy writing, I'm off for an adventure of my own, to Moscow and Leningrad. See you next month – if they let me out!

CHEAT'S CORNER

It's not often you get pokes for an adventure game, they are usually the province of arcades. One thing is certain, they are the tool of the games cheat! If you feel like cheating the C64 version of Quest For The Holy Grail, here is how Robert Owen gets a complete program listing:

Reset the computer, and:

```
POKE 2050,8
SYS 42291
POKE 45,PEEK(174)
POKE 46,PEEK(175)
POKE 47,PEEK(174)
POKE 48,PEEK(175)
POKE 49,PEEK(174)
POKE 50,PEEK(175)
```

SMASHED:
To get the key, take the cat and enter the chopper. Switch on the chopper, pull the joystick, and then land.

TRINITY:
Drop the paper bird in the playground, for transport!

JINXTER:
Doofer crystal chimney,
Drop the ash and hide,
Have the bracelet ready
When the finger shows
inside!

RIGEL'S REVENGE:
Pull the bar and pull it hard. Medicate and bend it up.

FISH:
Why make coffee yourself when there's an expert available?

Smashed

- **SUPPLIER: ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE.**
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- **REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL.**

Smashed is not exactly a new adventure, but has been the subject of many pleas in the Helpline, over the past few months. Unfortunately, I was sent neither a review copy nor a press release. Indeed, I only knew of its existence from the mail I was receiving.

Eventually I contacted the publisher, Alternative Software, who were kind enough to send me a copy post haste. So what is all the fuss about?

Smashed stands for Strangest Mobile Army Surgical Hospital East of Detroit. Needless to say, it helps a lot if you are a fan of the popular TV series MASH. You play the part of Pigseye Peers, an army surgeon. Before playing very far into the adventure, Clingon goes missing, presumably trapped in a minefield, and you are asked to report to the entrance to help out.

Now I'm not sure whether it was my lack of the intimate details of MASH, whether it was just sheer stupidity, or whether it is the way the adventure is written, but after some three or four hours playing, I had managed to solve only one problem, and even that didn't merit any points! However, it obviously is possible to do better than this, as a number of clues just starting to roll in to fhe Helpline testify. However, invariably the purveyors of such clues and their letters with an even greater number of problems with which they require help!

It's only a budget game, probably GACked, and written by the recently prolific C. A. Sharp (have I put you off yet?) but no-one has actually claimed to have solved it yet! There's no prizes on offer for anyone who does, but if you can afford the £1.99, and don't mind risking boredom whilst struggling with it, it may be worth a try And if you solve it, let me know!

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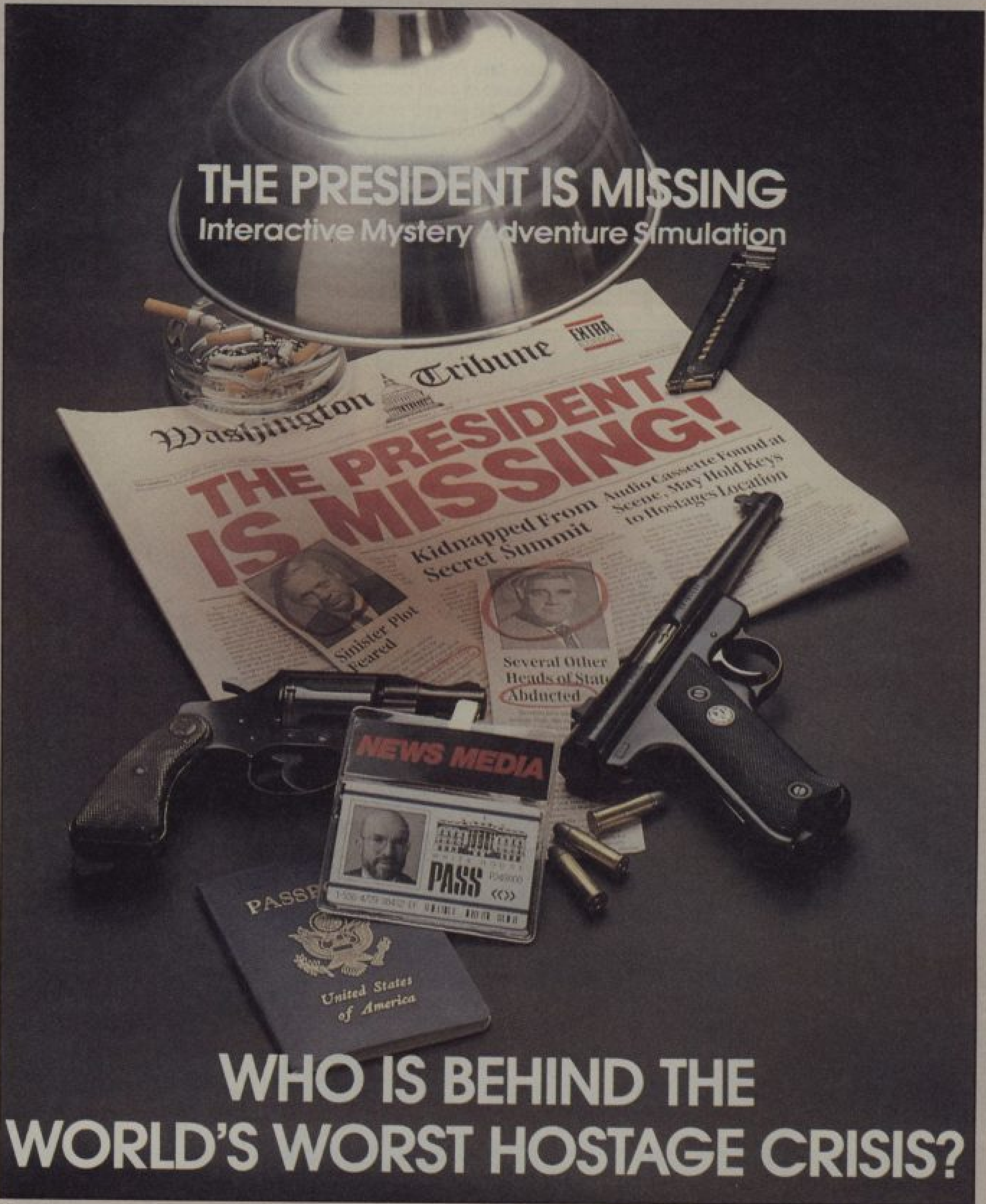
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FRAME UP

Where have all the 8-bit artists gone? This month Frame Up is completely dominated by 16-bit pictures. So come on C64, Spectrum and Amstrad owners, get out your pixel brushes and show those 16-bit owners that 8-bit artists are alive and kicking!

This month's delectable selection of colourful creations come from Simon Fincher of Evesham, Worcs, who drew Clagary '88 and the Skier on his ST, Lars Sandess from Breivika, Norway, who created Salamander on the Amiga, and Mick Tate from Tidworth, Hants whose Three Astronauts was also an Amiga product. Other Amiga artists are Matthew Key from Bury St. Edmunds (Vindicator), Darren Barwise of Doncaster (Clint Eastwood, Woody Allen and Oxygene) and busy Barry Pringle of Wembley, Middx (Afterburner, Robocop, Ghostbusters, Primal Urges and Rick 'n' Roll).



An Afterburner screen by Barry Pringle.



Simon Fincher's ST skier.



Salamander, drawn by Lars Sandness.

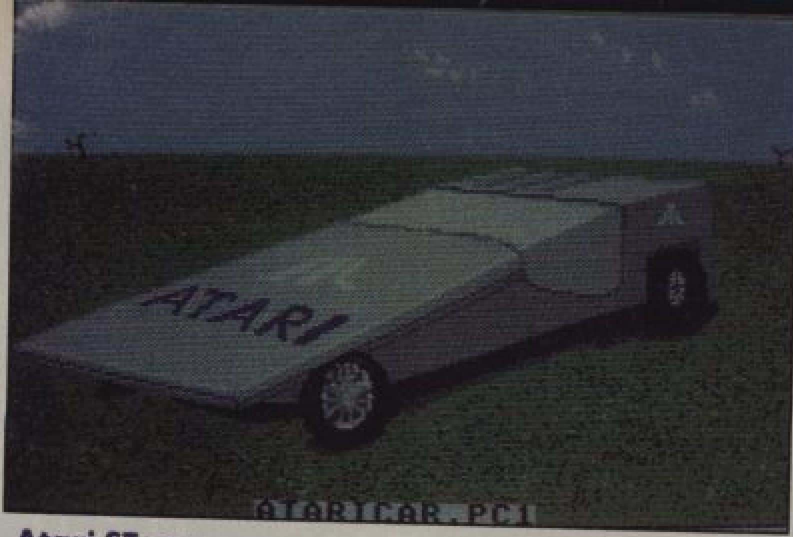


Clint by Barry P.

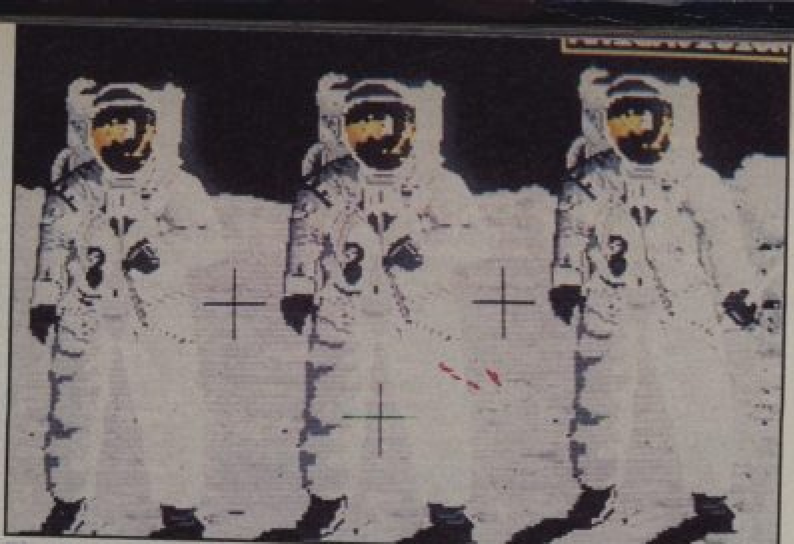


Calgary '88 by Simon.

FRAM



Atari ST car.



First men on the moon by Mick Tate.





Rad caveman by Baz.



Hey Rock 'n' Roll.



Part man, part machine: all Barry Pringle.



Woody by Barry Pringle.



Who you gonna call?

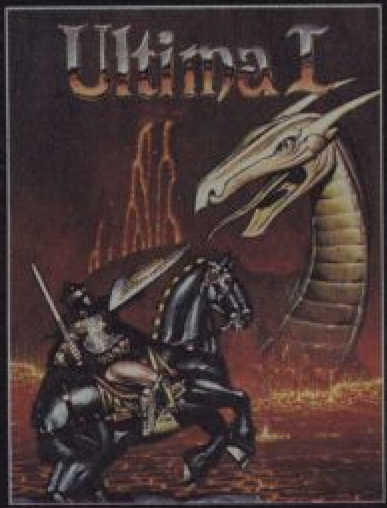


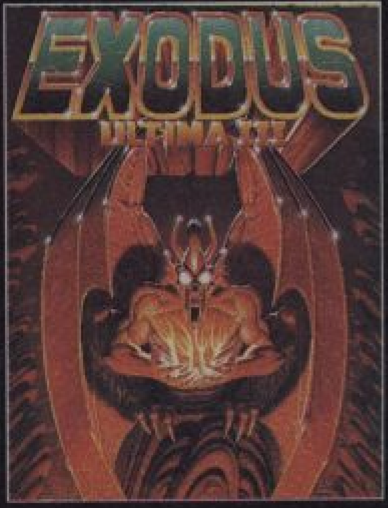
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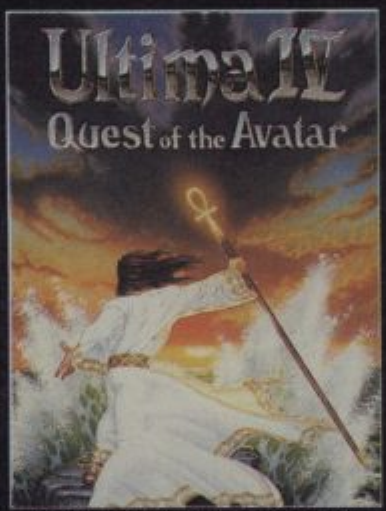
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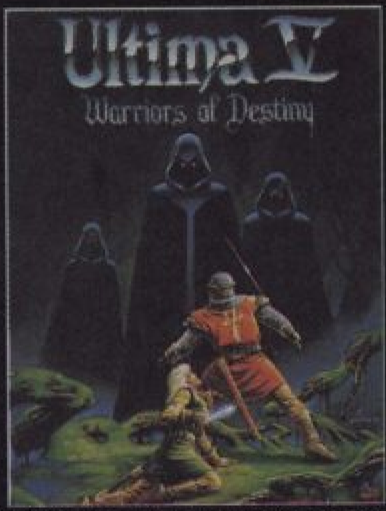
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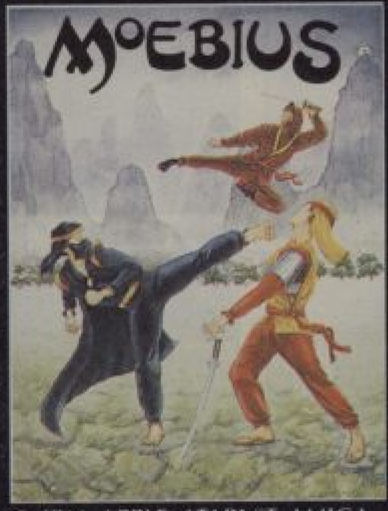
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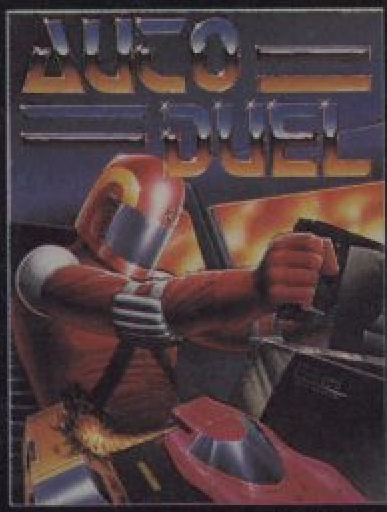


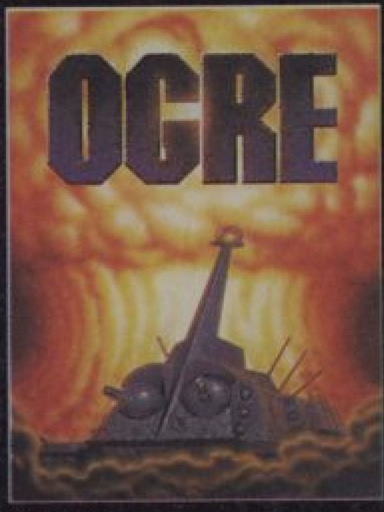






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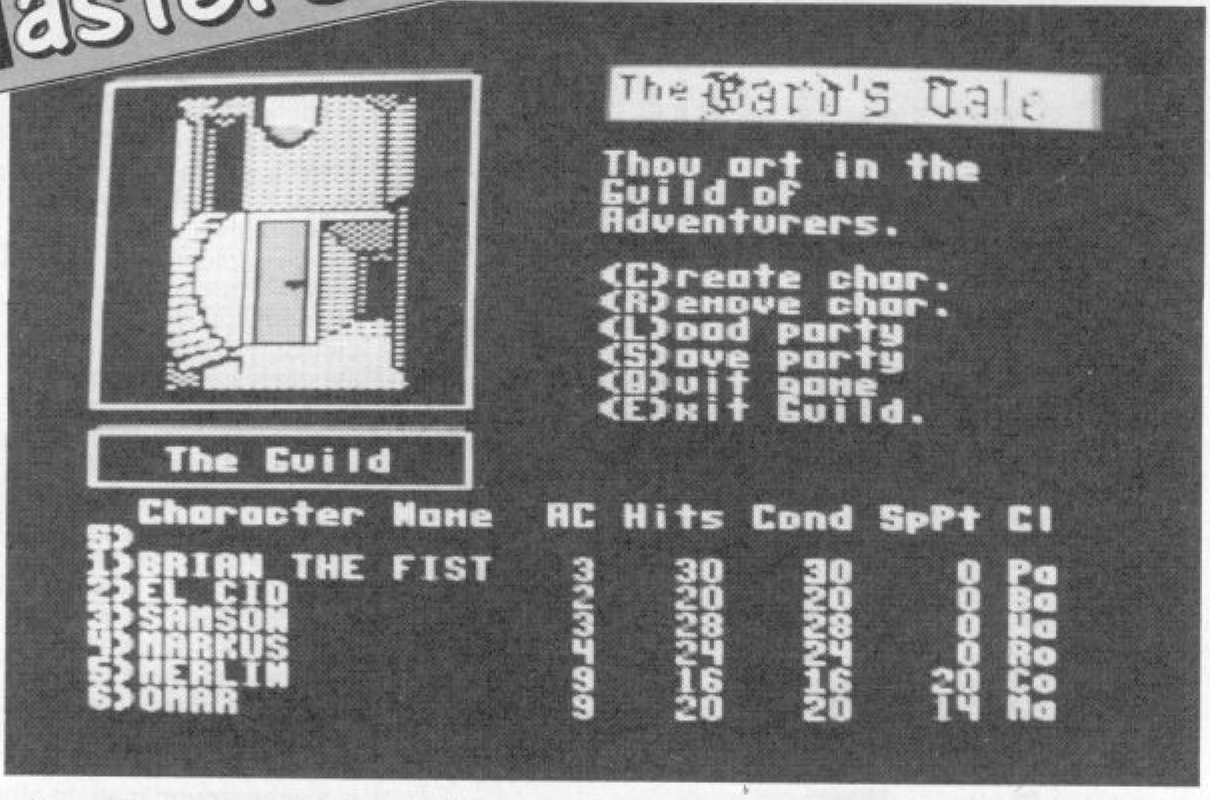




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Greetings all ye who read this passage, for if ye really needeth help on the trilogy of fiendishly tricky RPGs from yankee-based software house Interplay then fret no more, for what ye have in your hands is probably the most helpful batch of tips to get ye started on any of the series, and there's even some more advanced tips thrown in too. So on we go, with Tony Dillon's . . .

BARD'S TALE HINTS

The best tip for beginners that *I could find* is don't delete Brian the Fist or El Cid. Brian is an excellent swordsman, and perfect for starting with. El Cid, however, has one of the best items of equipment that I could find in both Tales of the Unknown AND The Destiny Knight (Bard's Tale 2, more later): the Firehorn. Simply by blowing this, he can cause enough damage to wipe out entire attacking groups. Keep him, or you'll regret it when confronted by two squillion rampant Ad Managers (a frightening thought in itself!).

A major problem that I, and a lot of other people, found when they begin a quest as large as the one in the BT series, is the simple, almost overwhelming question . . . Where do I start? Just for those of you who have bought the game, taken it home, loaded it up, and been hit by the sheer hopelessness of it all, here are a few starter key locations to get you going.

The all important Review Board (That's where your characters get promoted, dummy) is on Trumpet Street. From the north end of the street and going south, it's the second building on the left. The starter dungeon mentioned in the instructions is in the southern end of Rakhir Street, and goes by the quaint name 'The Scarlet Bard'. Underneath the inn is a large wine cellar, and to get to it, one of your characters has to ask for a drink. Which one? Well, you don't get Ale in a wine cellar, do you?

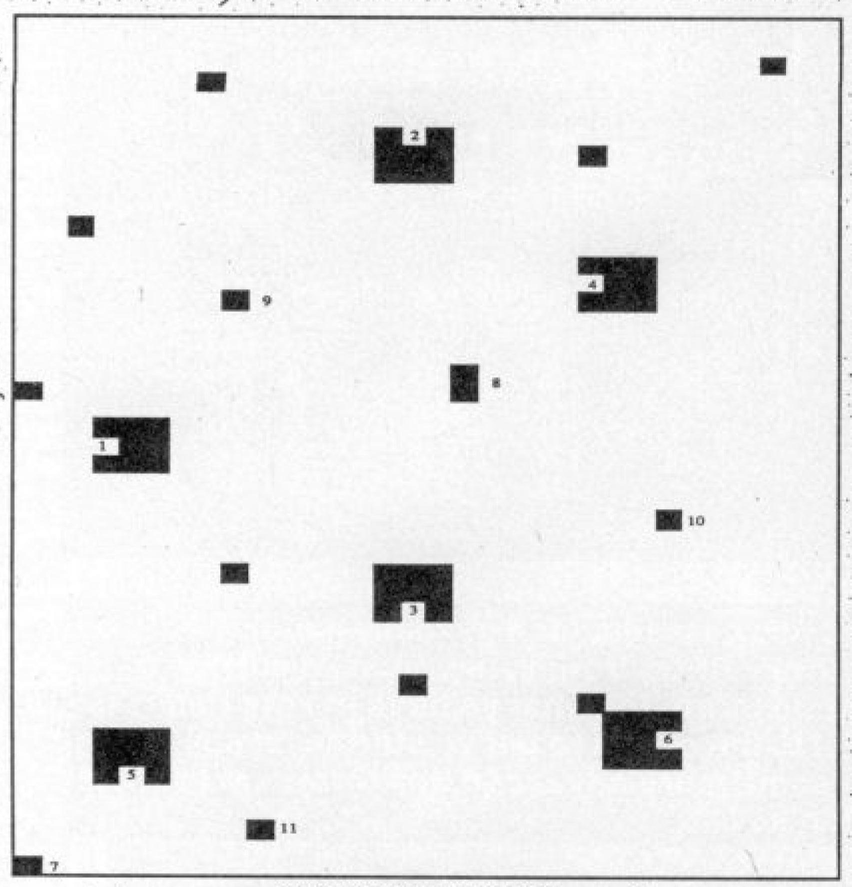
That should be enough to get you going, and before long, you'll be well on your way to destroying Mangar. There are still a lot of puzzles and stuff set there to stop you getting anywhere, and so Playmasters now brings you the most concise, yet informative hints guide ever.

To enter the Temple of the Mad God, utter the name Tarjan. In the second level of the Mad God's Temple, avoid the Soutwest area like you would a Great White's kiss. The area contains a spell which locks everyone in time, and is inescapable. Sit on the throne in Harkyn's Castle for a great reward. A secret exit to Mangar's domain is situated by ascending the stairs on the third level of the sewers, and using a certain Onyx item. More I cannot say. Well I can't give the entire game away, can I?

Not only do Playmasters bring you the hottest tips around, we also call in the experts for that more personal touch, and what bigger expert on the Bard's Tale series, than the director himself, Brian Fargo. Take it away, Bri.

"You want a couple of helpful hints? OK, well one of the most important things you're going to need is a 3rd Level Sorcerer, to cast a healing spell, and the quickest way, I find, is to send out a small party (less than 6PCs). That way, each character gains more experience, making them go up levels faster. You want more? Um, at night the monsters are a lot harder to kill, so if you don't fancy fighting any, run into the Adventurer's Guild, and run out again, and voila, it's daytime again. Is that OK?" More from Bri later, but first turn the page for . . .





THE WILDERNESS

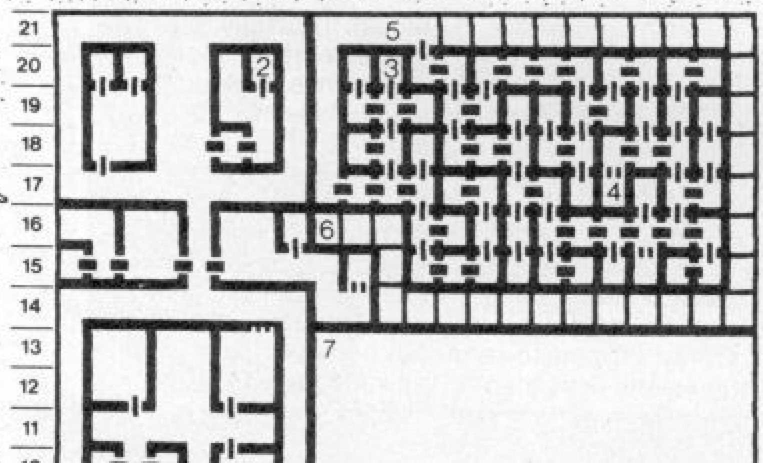
Starting Bard's Tale 2 is, in effect, a lot simpler than BT1. Finding your way around the city of Tangramayne is a cinch, thanks to the eversohelpful map enclosed in the instruction. One problem you will most definitely discover is finding the other towns. Some key locations are quite small, so you may find yourself running around, all to no avail. Still, weep no more, for if you care to glance around, you will find no less than a map of the Wilderness, with all key locations and cities marked, courtesy of Electronic Arts. Still, enough about starting, on with the tips.

The third level of the Dark Domain (the starter dungeon) is a wraparound map. In other words, walk off the north end of the map, and you reappear at the south end. In answer to the riddle, the master of the mind is Mangar. When faced with the message "things change unnoticed, and not always for the better" on the first level of the tombs, you'll find that you've been teleported down a level. In Dargoth's Tower, it's better to burn. (You'll know what I mean when you get to it.) The battlecry is "havok".

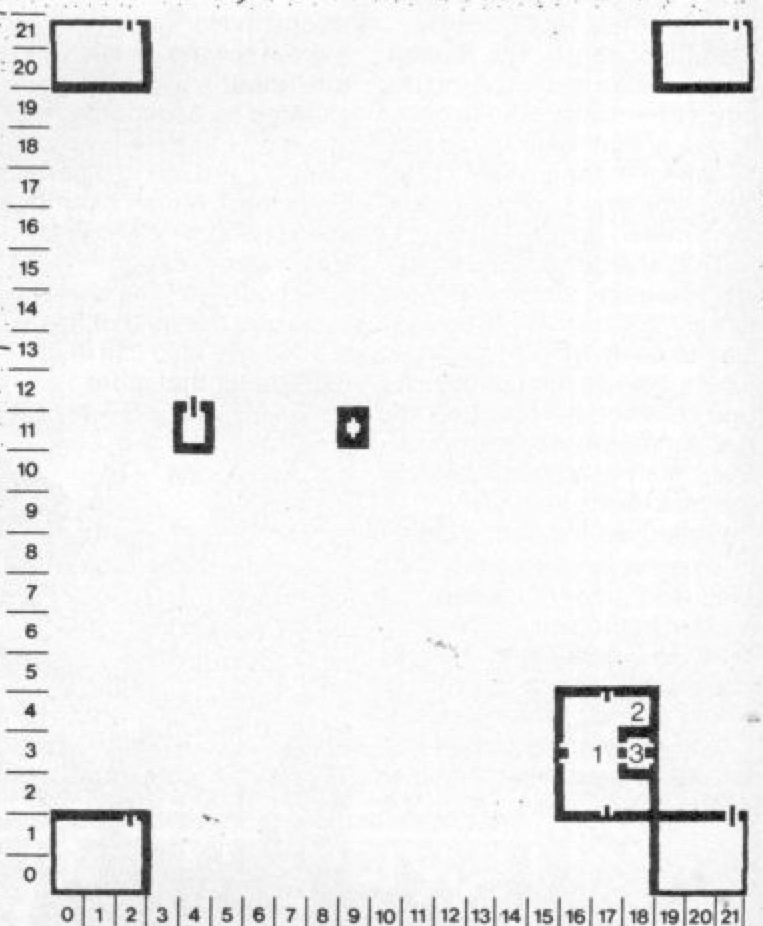
Phew, try saying that lot in one breath. As usual, if that ain't enough, here's Brian.

"The Destiny Knight? Um, well, ask the sage about everything you can think of. He can reveal some pretty amazing things. Another one? On the later dungeons, the monsters are so good that they can't be hit in hand to hand . . ."

VOL 2~ THE DESTINY KNIGHT



THE DESTINY STONE, LEVEL ONE



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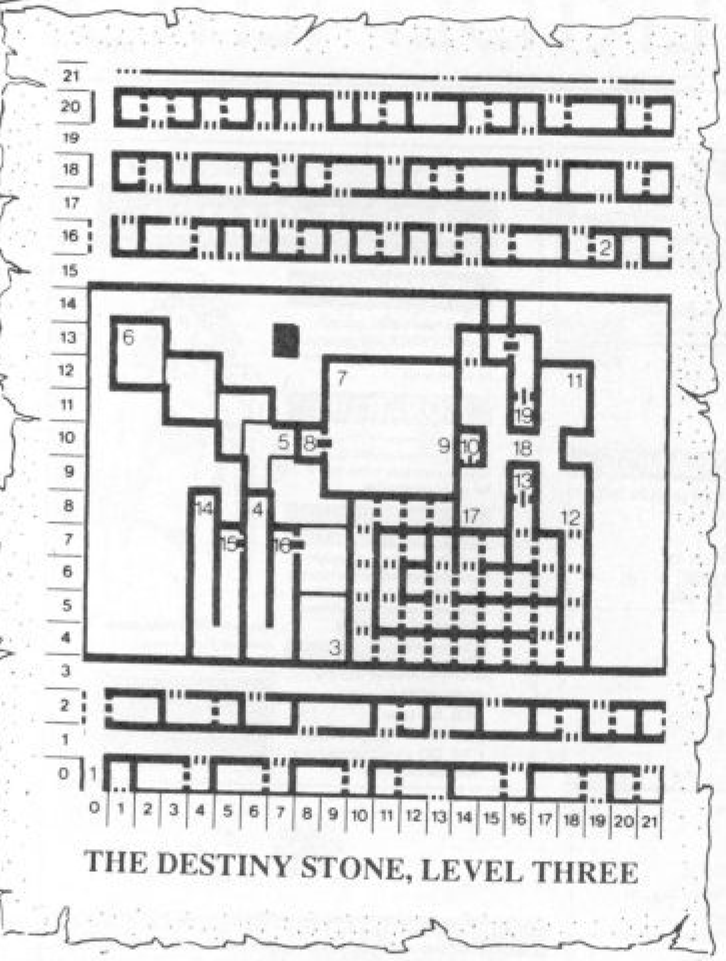
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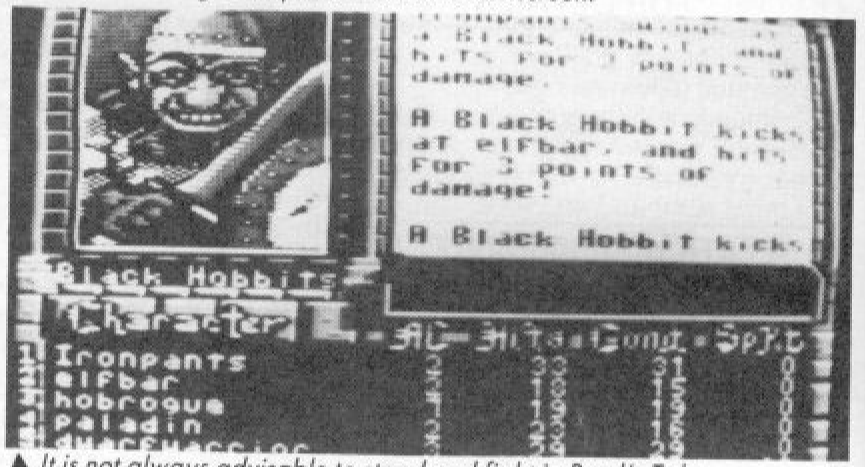
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THE DESTINY STONE, LEVEL THREE


▲ The wandering bard performs on the title screen.



▲ It is not always advisable to stand and fight in Bard's Tale.

VOL 3~ THE THIEF OF FATE

This is the biggest and the hardest out of all three. The Review Board is four paces north and 14 paces east of the city gates in Scara Brae. Advancing levels is pretty easy at first, because of the large amounts of experience gained in small battles. Ideally, you should aim for at least 14th level characters before attempting the starter dungeon in the Mad God's temple. When you are ready, though, go to the Temple (it's in the city square) and tell the priest CHAOS. Yes, I know you are told to tell him TARJAN, but that's a complete waste of time. Try it, and you'll see what I mean. When you do reach Brilhasti Ap Tarj, kill him instantly with a spell, whilst using the FAFO spell to keep the dark guards away. Beware of them, they are mean.

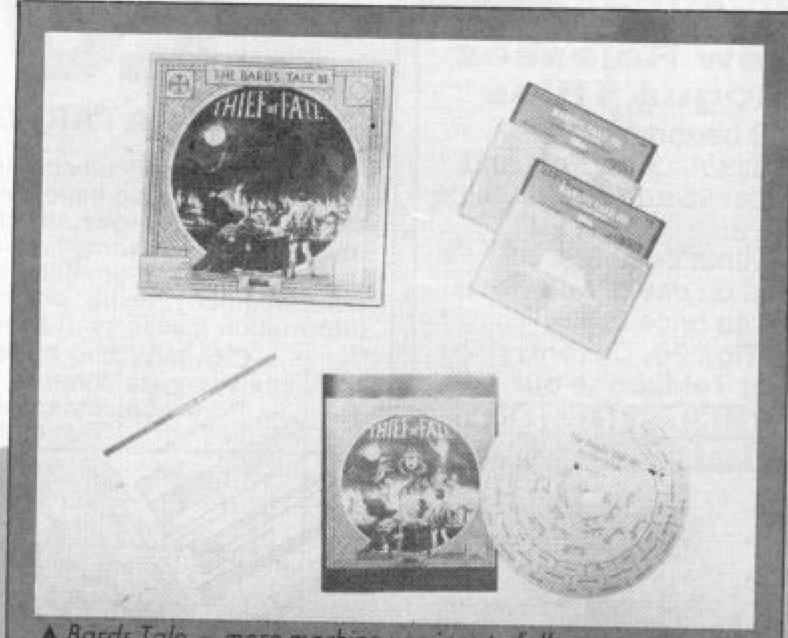
Once you've done all that, and have got a chronometer, then it's off to the dimensions you must go. Somewhere on this layout is a nice little table, showing you all the quests that must be carried out, as well as where to go to teleport to them.

A couple of final general hints. Recruit Hawkslayer when you meet him.

Always try to have Elik's Instant Slayer in your party. Remember, in some fights, it's easier, quicker, and a lot safer to run.

Here he is again, for the final time, back by popular demand, Brian Fargo!

"What I can say without giving everything away. Let the magic characters use the Harmonic Gems, they replenish spell points. Also, there are certain places where your bard can learn new songs." All that remains to be said is, in the immortal parting words of Brian Fargo "Happy adventuring, and keep good maps ."



▲ Bards Tale – more machine versions to follow.

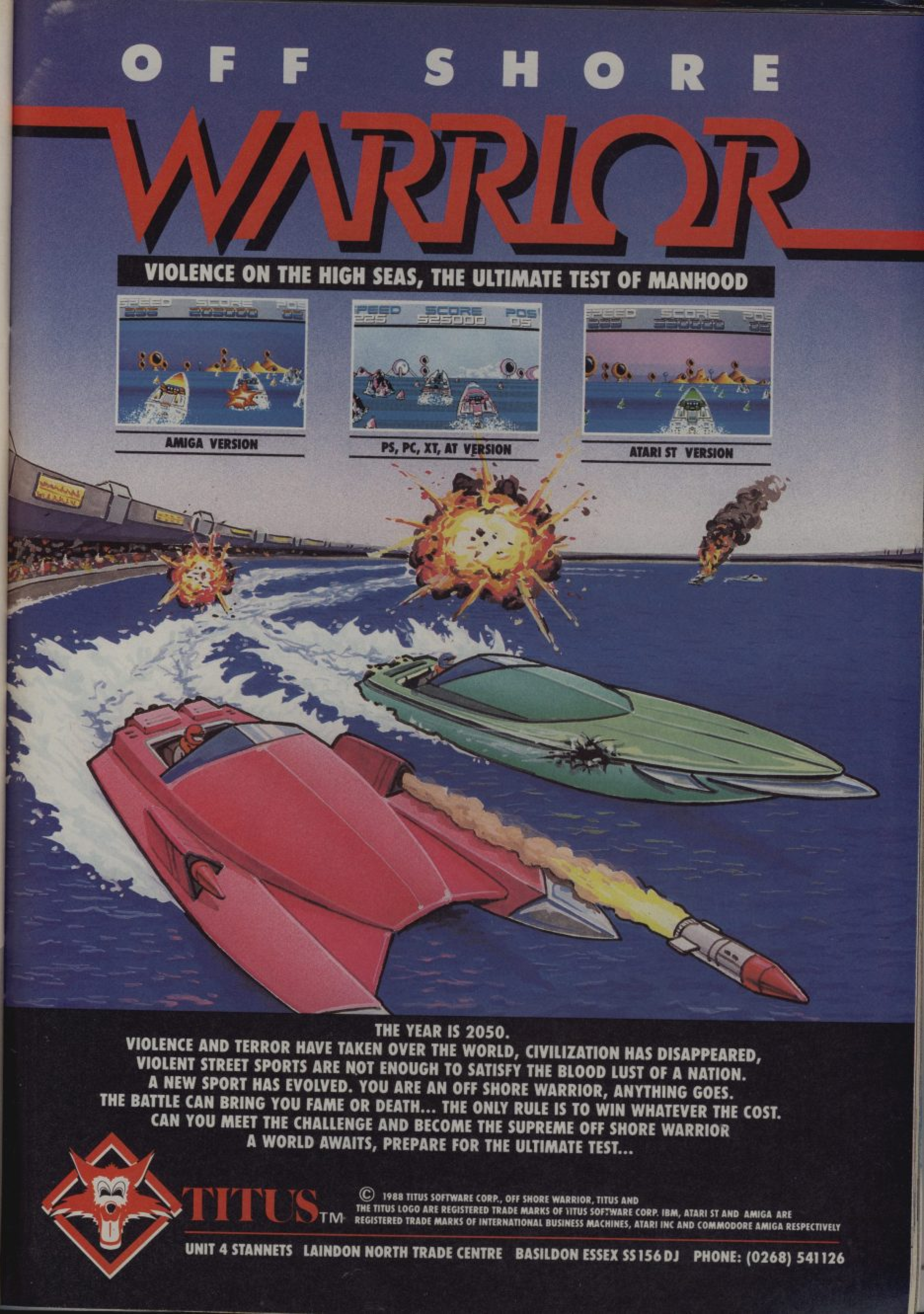
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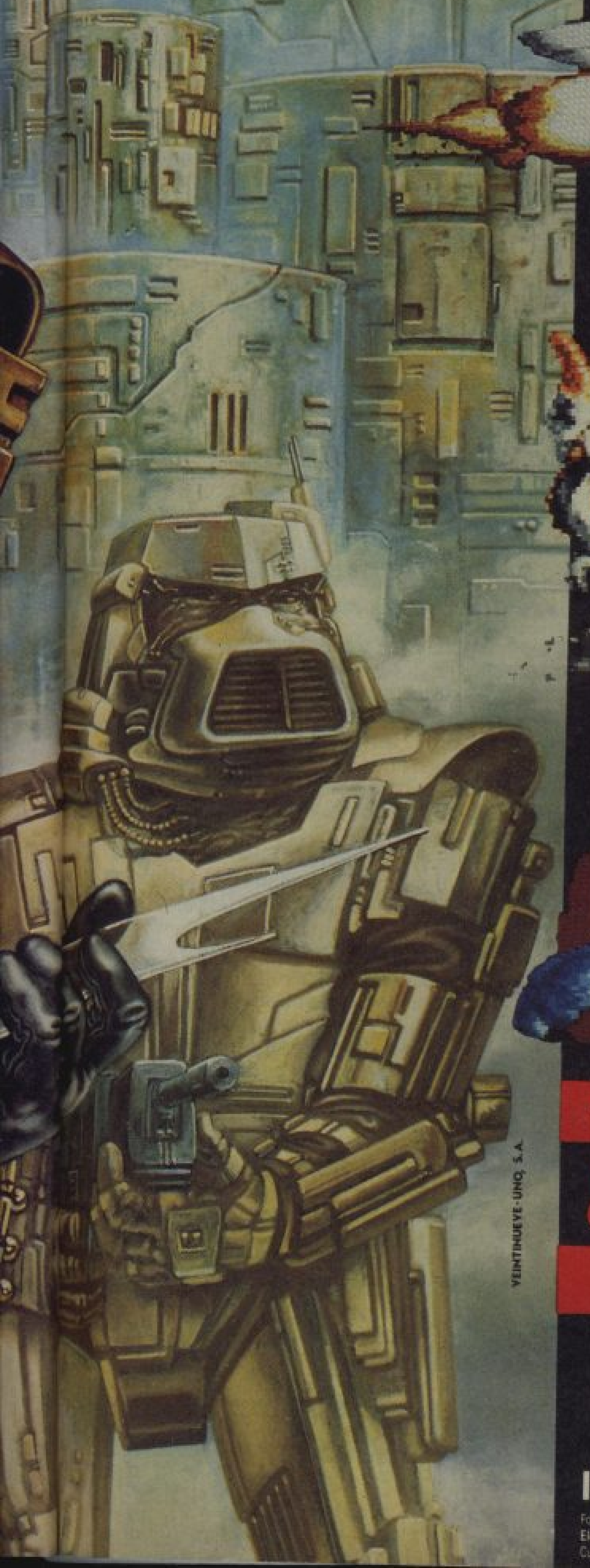


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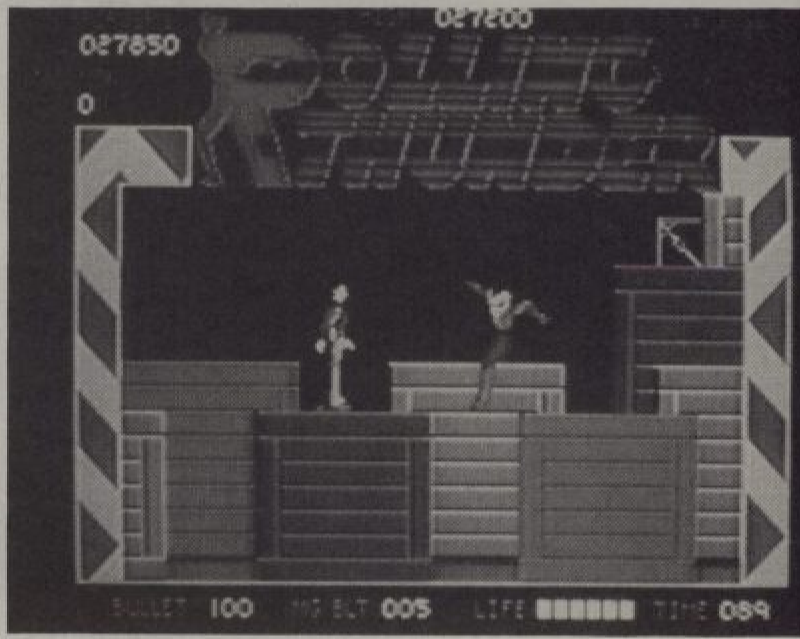
DINAMIC

Play Masters

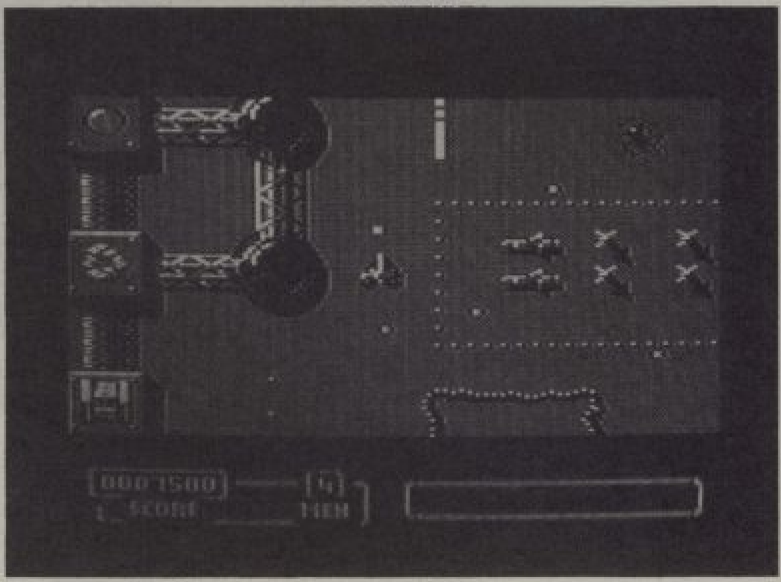
Hello! Come on in. Why not savour some a la carte tips? And what a varied and tasty pot-pourrie there is this month, with *Bards Tale* hints and tips, a *Mickey Mouse* map and tips, as well as a plethora of POKEs and cheats.

If you have some tips, a map, some POKEs – or whatever you think could help other compu:er games players – send in your stuff to: Julian Rignall, Playmasters, C + VG, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Don't forget that there's bundles of software on offer to the sender of the best tips – and that could be you!





▲ *Rolling Thunder: PTO to Cheat!*



▲ *Marauder – see the Commodore Cheat.*

As always, when you send in your tips, don't forget to state which machine your tips are for. And if you send in POKEs, give a detailed description of how they should be entered.

This month congratulations are in order to Kenneth Brady of Dublin and Robert Hayden of Lings for their excellent tips: bundles of software are at this very moment being sent off . . .

VIRUS (Atari ST)

One of the most difficult things about this game is getting to grips with the control method. However, if you're a proficient hoverplane pilot, you should find these tips from Robert Hayden useful.

Drones are the tricky craft to deal with. When you spot one, track it down at low altitude, then climb rapidly and shoot towards it. It might respond to your attack, but could easily get bored and trundle off in search of a tree so it can mutate.

Mutated drones are dealt with in similar fashion, but twist as you climb to spray bullets across its flightpath. If you miss, drop to low altitude and repeat the move.

Fighters are tougher, but can also be dealt with in the same manner – or you could always use a missile if you're feeling particularly lazy.

Seeders are pure cannon fodder: just track them down and blast them to bits – just be careful not to fly through their red virus spray.

Bombers are a priority target – they rapidly deploy cannisters of concentrated virus. Fly at high altitude and swoop down, blasting as you dive. It takes a lot of practice to be able to complete this.

GAUNTLET II (US Gold)

Following on from last month's Gauntlet II tips: here's how to enter secret rooms. Thanks to Kevin Bulmer of Gremlin Graphics for the help!

At the beginning of some screens is a cryptic clue which should be solved to enter the secret room.

GO ON A DIET: You'll have to experiment with this one, but either eat two or three foods only.

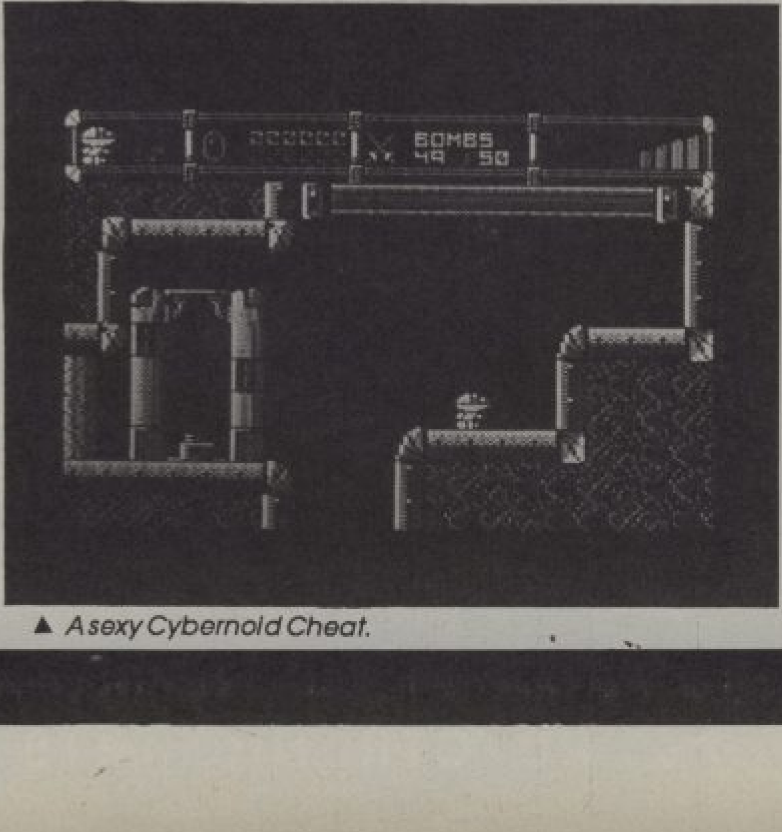
SAVE SUPER SHOTS: You have to leave the room with ten super shots – so collect ONE amulet last thing and don't fire before you exit the screen.

USE TRANSPORTABILITY: Use a transporter either 3 or 15 times (you'll have to experiment again).

BE PUSHY: Experiment time again – push either two or three moveable walls onto an exit or transporter and destroy them.

DON'T GET HIT: Easy enough – avoid being hit by monster's missiles.

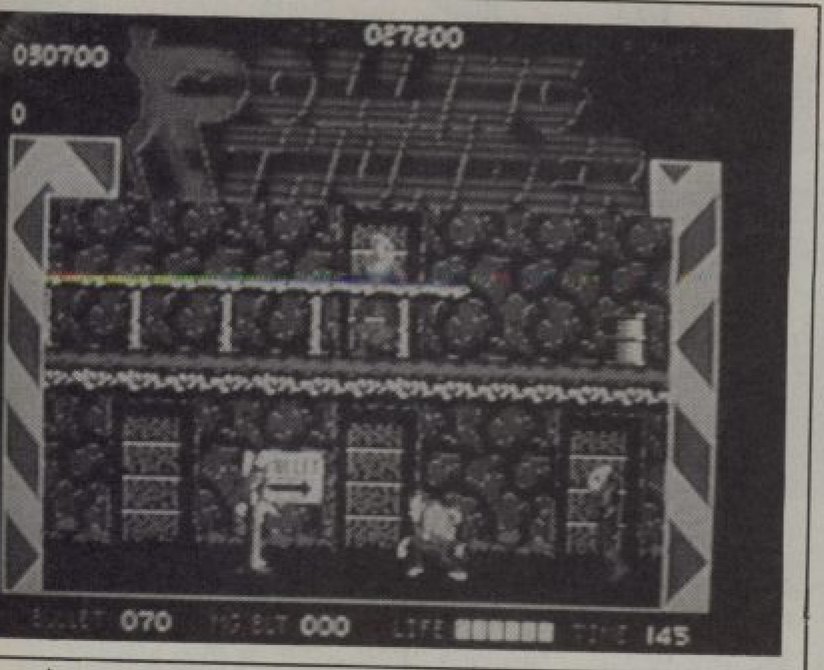
By there way, there are two different secret rooms, and you can't enter one until you've passed screen 12.



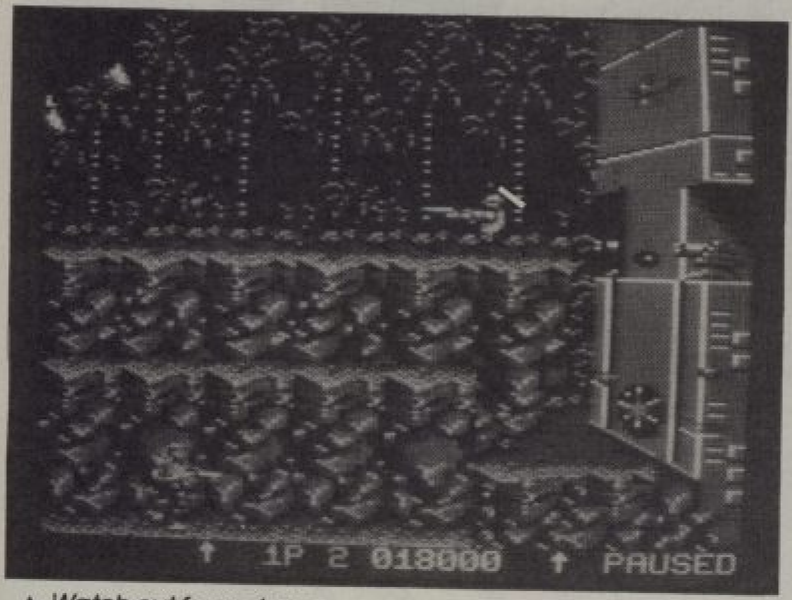
▲ *A sexy Cybernoid Cheat.*

MARAUDER (Hewson)

Okay Commodore owners! Boot up the game and on the title screen press the Commodore key, Q, 2 and the space bar and the words Cheat On will appear at the bottom of the screen. Start the game and you'll find a rather easy game. Thanks to Kenneth Brady for that little gem.



▲ *An easy to use C64 Cheat.*

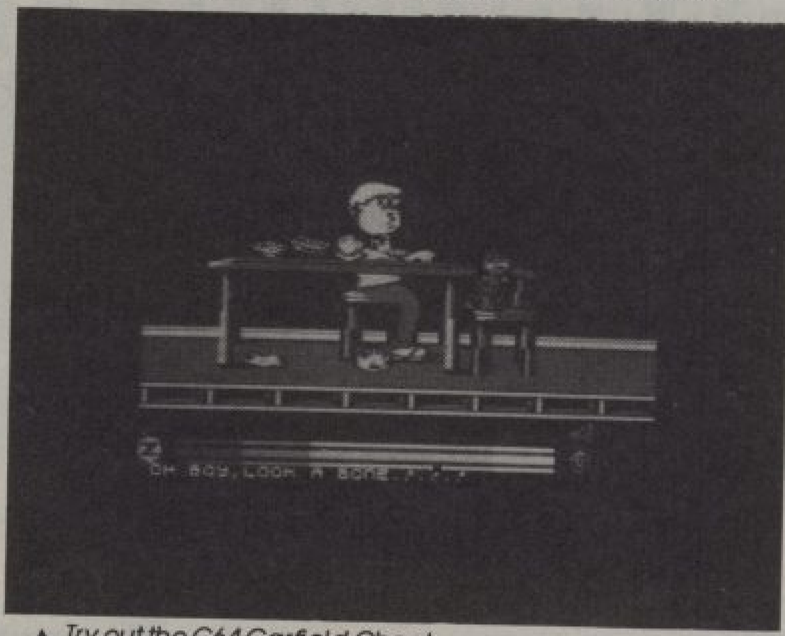


▲ *Watch out from above.*

CYBERNOID (Hewson)
A bit of an oldie tip, but just in case you don't know, define the keys as Y, X, E, S (in that order) and a host of ships are yours for the playing and destroying. Cheers to Kenneth Brady of Dublin for that C64 tip.

GARFIELD (The Edge)
More C64 stuff – this time a reset POKE. Load the game, reset the machine and type POKE 25 389, 173: POKE 25 370, 173 (RETURN) and Garfield will be endowed with unlimited awakeness and food. By the way, if you don't know how to reset your C64 – go and buy a reset switch (look in the classifieds) or buy a cartridge (Evesham Micros, Datel and Trilogic all have them). If you're a C128 owner, just use the reset button next to the ON/OFF switch – but don't forget to keep the Commodore key pressed as you push the button.

BETTER DEAD THAN ALIEN
Matthew J. Howkins of Leamington Spa has a convoluted, but effective way to get extra lives on this rather naff ST game. Select two-player mode and input options from the menu. Move player one's input choice onto the keyboard and press fire. Type in the required keys. Now do exactly the same for player two, and type in the required keys, making sure they're exactly the same as player one's. Press escape twice and start the game. Press your chosen key for right and both ships will move right. Keep pressing right until both ships merge and you'll find yourself with twice the firepower and twice the lives.



▲ *Try out the C64 Garfield Cheat.*

DRUID II (Firebird)
Right, Spectrum owners. Get your fingers into gear and enter the following listing for unlimited energy and lives.

```
10 FOR F=65 024 TO 65 031
20 READ A: POKE F,A
30 NEXT F
40 LOAD ""CODE
50 POKE 6405 8,25 4
60 RANDOMIZE USR 64000
70 DATA 62, 58, 50, 60, 117
80 DATA 195, 0, 111
```

Load the very first part of the game, switch off the computer, stop the tape, type in the listing, RUN it and press play on tape to load the rest of the game.

ROLLING THUNDER (US Gold)
Rolling Thunder is quite an apt description of Garry Williams, C+ VG's suet-featured Ads Manager – his great folds of flesh thunder as he rolls into the office. I digress. This little tiplet, supplied by Kenneth Brady of Dublin, lets you choose what level you want to start on. Just press F1, F5 and F7 together and then press F7 to pick the level you desire to play. That's a C64 tip by the way.

GUTZ (Special FX)
Another Spectrum Multiface POKE. Load the game and stop it so you can enter POKE 38915, 62. Restart the game and you'll have zillions of lives. Well, an infinite number actually. Many thanks to Edward O'Donnell of West Lothian for that.

TARGET RENEGADE (Ocean)
Once again it's Multiface time again. Load and stop the game, and tupe POKE 63760, 255 for loads of time. Thanks once again to Edward O'Donnell.

STREET FIGHTER (GO!)
This is one of the simplest ST games I've ever encountered – all but the last opponents can be defeated by using the crouching kick. The last one, Sagat, is also defeated by the crouching kick – but you actually have to jump when he hurls a fireball at you. Wow! C'est la challenge formidable . . . or something like that.

GRYZOR (Ocean)
Brendon McDonogh from Chez No Fixed Abode has put together these very useful Gryzor tips, which should be relevant for all formats of the game – and even the arcade version!

LEVEL ONE
When you start off, hold the fire button down and run across the top path. When the mounted gun just before the bridge scrolls off the screen, shoot the scatter and collect it. Pull down on the joystick and press space to jump down into the water. Walk under the mounted gun without stopping until you're out of range, but watch out for the soldiers shooting from above.

Jump twice to get to the top path. Blast the top emplacement when you reach the end screen, then jump down and destroy the middle one. Be careful of soldiers during this time. Shoot out the remaining emplacement and you'll finish the level. Easy! No things get a little tougher . . .

LEVEL TWO
If you still have the scatter gun, this level is pretty easy. If you haven't, prepare to battle. The first sensor is at gun sight, so simply stand and blast – only avoid enemy gunfire if you have to. The next one is behind a wall, so blast and blast again. The third sensor is between two walls, so lie down and shoot repeatedly, only dodging if an enemy soldier throws a stick grenade. The final sensor is high up so you have to jump and fire at the same time.

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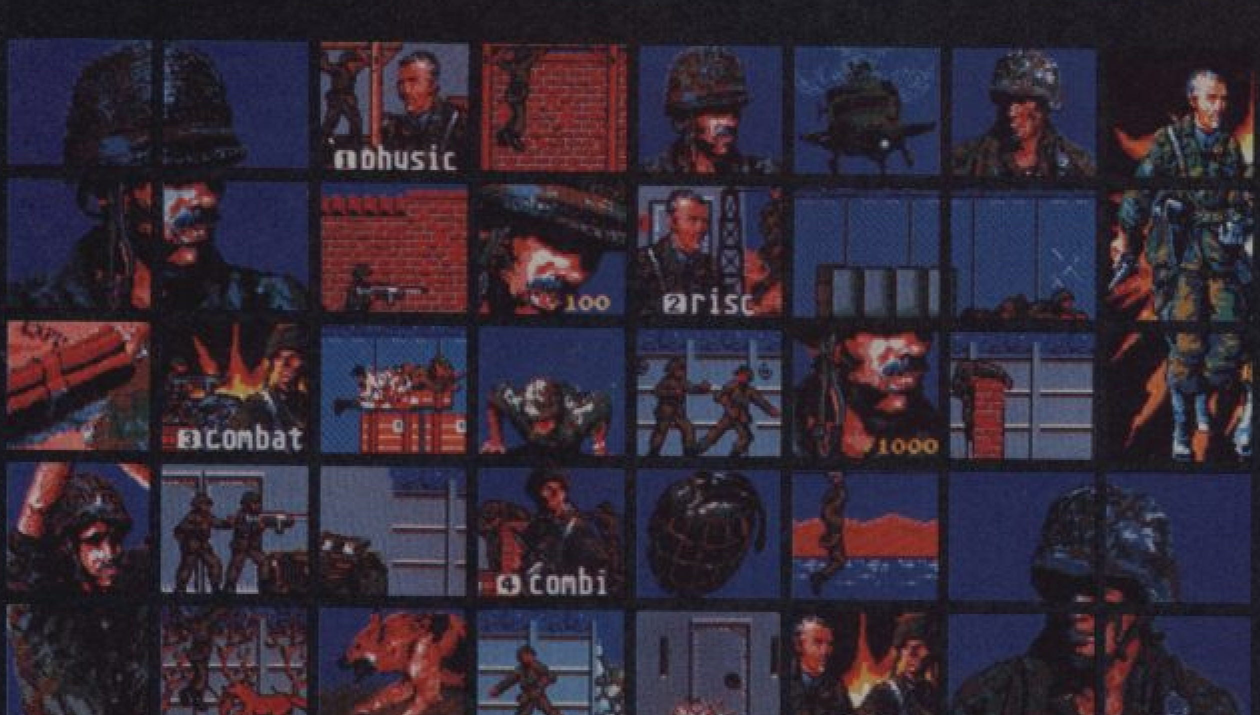
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Screen shots from Atari ST version

ACTION SERVICE - ONE DAY THIS MAY BE MORE THAN JUST A GAME...

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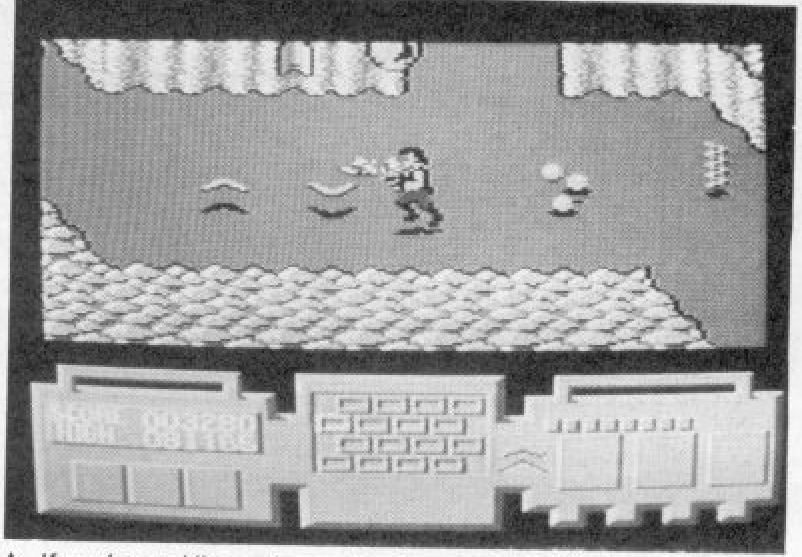
LEVEL THREE
Scatter gun owners shouldn't find the going to tough here. The wall in front of Gryzor opens up to reveal two mean scatter cannons and four sensors. The cannons fire every ten seconds, and you have to be ready when they do; stand under the left hand edge of the left sensor, and the bullets whizz close by – but won't harm Gryzor. In between this, blast like crazy and try and take out the rest of the machine. When the scatter guns are left, go to the safe place and blast upwards. Repeat by going to the right edge of the right gun. Now a silver thing appears at the top of the screen and oscillates from side to side, launching firebombs. Avoid these and shoot it – it takes practice, but try and adopt a point, shoot and run technique. The next part of the section is similar, but men run from either side of the screen. Stand under the opening doors and get two shots in as they open, run and take out the two men that run on. Go back under the doors again and repeat the move. When both doors are blown, repeatedly shoot the top or the construction and it'll eventually explode.

LEVEL FOUR
This is very similar to level two, except the sensors are in different places. Use the same techniques, but make sure you don't dally around – time is short.

LEVEL FIVE
Similar to level three, only harder. There are three sensors at the top of the screen, which fire at where you're standing – so keep on the move and don't return to the place you just left if the scatter guns have just fired. There's no real tips to give here – it's just a case of dodging and blasting. When the sensors are destroyed, four silver things appear at the top of the screen and move back and forth, firing. You can only score a hit when they join together in pairs, so watch to get your timing right, nip in, blast and dodge their bullets. Practice is of the essence, but once the timing is sussed, this formidable-looking task is easy.

Well, easy-ish.

LEVEL SIX
Set on an icy wasteland, soldiers are dropped from a mothership and proceed to attack – it's very difficult to get through, and usually a life is lost in trying to do so. Take the high road, and when you see a sniper, duck and blast him. Just off the track and blast the sniper who's on the slightly higher level (use angled shots). Jump up, take his place and shoot at the man who follows. Fall down to the bottom path and walk right up to the sniper, shoot him diagonally, being careful of the soldier behind you. Jump up and shoot the laser add-on that flies past. Walk up slowly until you see the truck, run to the far left and let it have it. After it's destroyed, walk on and until the giant soldier appears, then lie down WITH THE SPACE BAR HELD DOWN and shoot. If it fires a middle shot, it'll pass overhead, a low shot should be avoided by standing up when it's very close, and Gryzor jumps over it. When he's been dealt with, walk on and fall through the gap. The yellow blobs expand every fire seconds, so jump when the opportunity arises. Walk on until you see another giant, and follow the same procedure as before. Next comes a deadly passage with electricity zapping from the roof to the floor. The charges switch off for a second every so often, so stay alert and move whenever you can. At the end of this an invulnerability add-on flies by, so shoot and collect it and run through the remaining barriers. At the end is a head on a pipe, which should be shot repeatedly and quickly before the invulnerability wears off to finish the game.



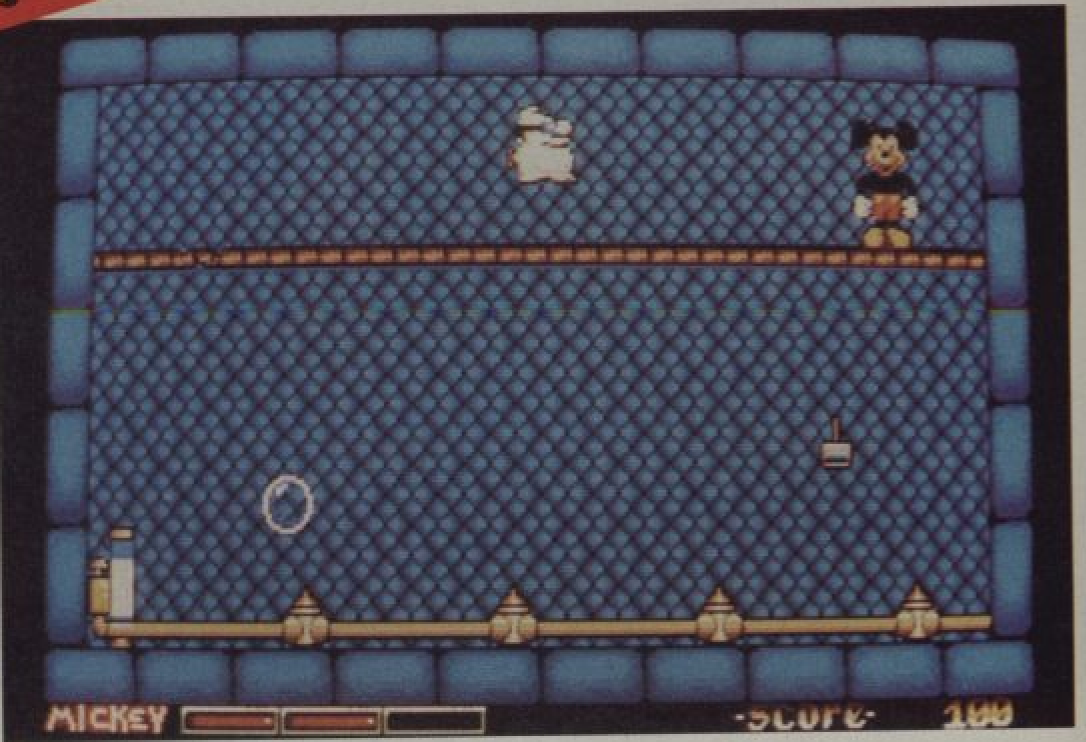
▲ *If you've got the gutz, use the Spectrum Poke.*

HUNTER'S MOON (Thalamus)
Arriving just in time for this month's tips section are a few POKEs for this fabulous shoot 'em up from the author, Martin Walker. Load and reset the game (using a reset switch, for nothing else will do). Enter POKE 16101,5:POKE 16106,6 (RETURN) and restart the game with SYS 6412 (RETURN). A secret unused sound effect is activated, which sounds alarmingly similar to the noise used during the shower scene of a famous Alfred Hitchcock film. Most Hunter's Moon players should already know that pressing the 2, 3 or 4 keys on the title screen in conjunction with the fire button starts the game on that level. We-e-ll, if you reset the machine and POKE 65 99, number from 0-15 will let you start on any of the first 16 levels (depending on which number you used) by pressing key 2 at the start. POKE 6618, 0-15 selects levels 17-32 on key 3, and POKE 6632, 0-15 selects levels 33-48 from key 4. Restart with SYS 6412, and start from your selected level by pressing the relevant key as you start the game. And get ready to rock the joint . . .



▲ *Kick ass with a Speccy Poke.*

MICKEY MOUSE MAP





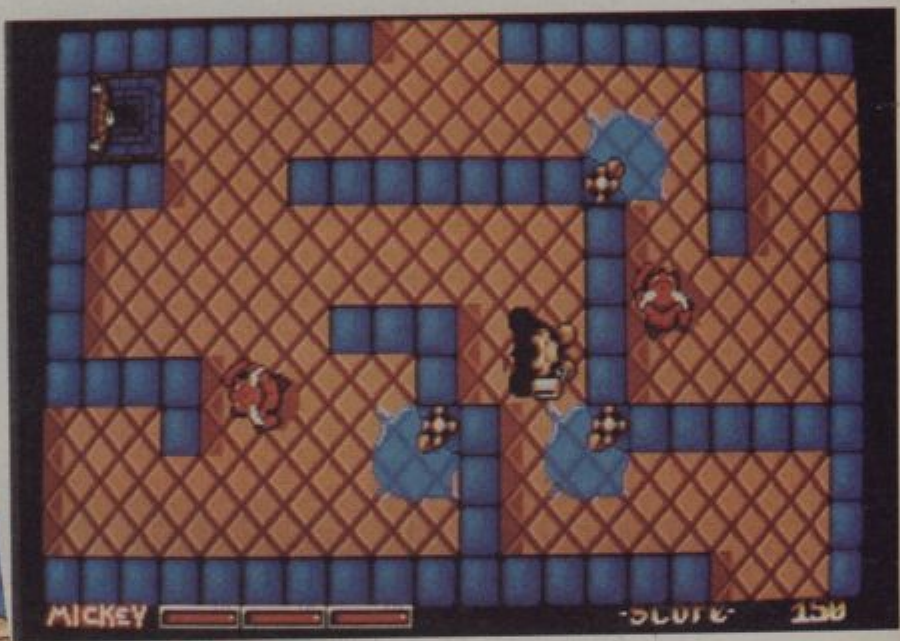
Right, all you Mickey fans — we have the official tips for all formats of this game, so nobody's going to miss out.

If you're an Atari ST owner, there's a really neat cheat for you. Load the game and on the title screen press the INSERT key, followed by 6, 1, 3, 1, 5, 6, 8, 8 and finally press the INSERT key again. Start the game and everything will appear as normal. However, if you press F2, you'll be given a bonus secret key, F3 automatically completes the level, and Mickey faces the witch and F4 fills the waterpistol up. Pressing. On the keypad successfully completes a side room, and ENTER on the keypad causes failure — which is a rather strange option.

Spectrum owners are catered for by way of a POKE. Switch on your machine and type POKE 52428, 1 and then follow the normal LOAD" procedure. When the game loads you'll discover that Mickey has an unlimited water supply and can complete a level simply by entering a side door. Why can't all cheats be that simple to enter?

Next on the agenda is Amstrad owners. Switch on the machine, type POKE 11792,1 (RETURN) and follow normal loading procedure to activate the cheat mode, which is identical to the Spectrum.

Last, but not least, is the Commodore 64 mode. Try pressing C on the credits screen and press CONTROL and 2 to activate different effects.

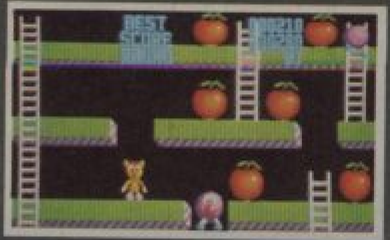




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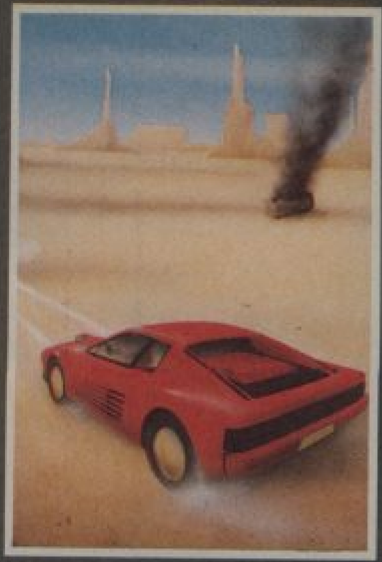


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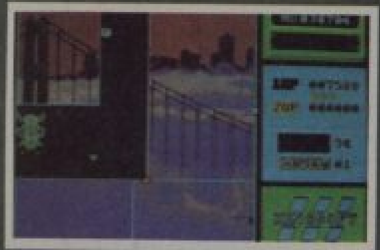




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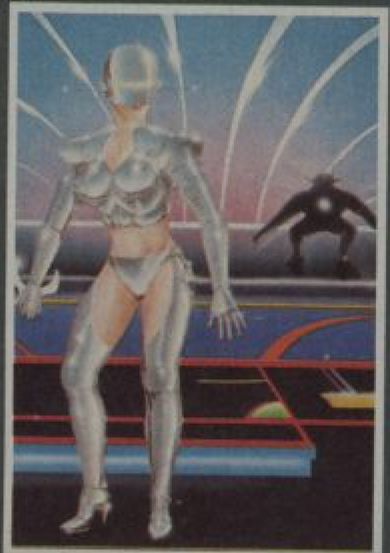
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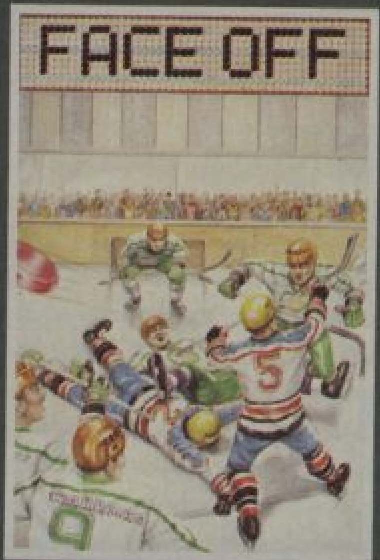


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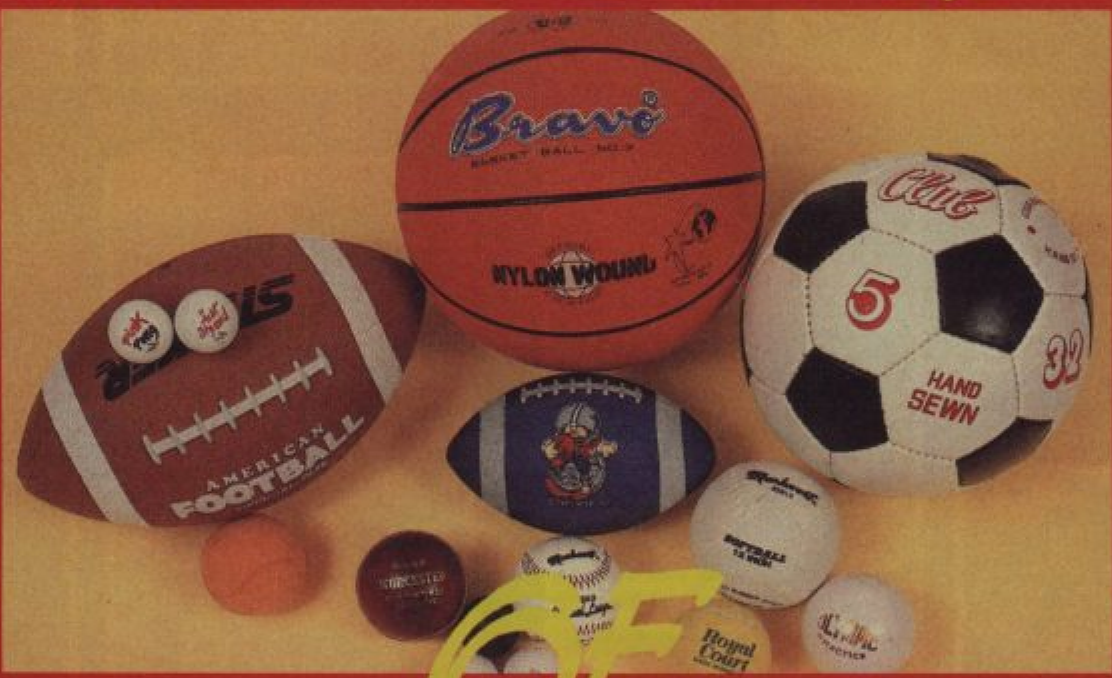


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An excellent sort of prize, we're sure you'll agree. All these come courtesy of top budget house Alternative, to celebrate the launch of their American football game *Endzone*, the latest edition to a wide range of sports sims. You're bound to have seen a least some of them; Football Frenzy, Indoor Soccer, Cricket Crazy, Howzat!, and mega-hit Soccer Boss. *Endzone* follows a similar management-type format to that best seller, and looks to be one of the big 8 bit sellers of the coming months.

The winner will get all the balls, a handy dandy bike pump adaptor to blow them up with, and a selection of alternative sports games. Twenty runners up will just get the games. Ready for the questions?

1) How many footballs can you see on the entire inlay sheet for Soccer Boss?

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ARCADE

A tale of two cities this month, with two new cute titles, *Dynamite Dux* from Sega and Jaleco's *Legend of Makaj* being offset by the latest in arcade violence, *Cabal*. Clare Edgeley brings you this report.



▲ *Grab that treasure chest.*

LEGEND OF MAKAJ

Legend of Makal might have pretty dreary graphics, but don't let that put you off the game which is a reasonably fast-paced arcade adventure in the *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* style.

The story line is pretty naff though – as usual you've got to rescue someone or other. However, to get to them, you're going to have to travel a tortuous route, bashing baddies with your double axe-head boomerang, buying new weapons, collecting keys and finding the letters of the spell which will defeat the evil wizard.

The surpirse of the game is that you seen to be in control of a heroine, and if she's not a girl, he's a pretty effeminate male – long legs tucked into short boots, long hair and a short tunic. So it could be that you're off to rescue the 'poor, defenseless boyfriend who's been kidnapped by the evil wizard'! A nice change.

The game starts in a wood, trees towering above your head with interlocking branches forming an uneven and slightly dodgey ladder upwards. Immediately you'll be set upon by a variety of monsters. The money collected is displayed clearly at the bottom of the screen and is vital if you're to buy information, potions and more sophisticated weapons.

Jump up into the branches of the tree and while you're about it, knock out the spitting orchids, huge plants which throw fireballs in your general direction. One direct hit from you and they'll topple off their perches leaving the branch tree. One irritating thing is that they reappear if you should visit that branch again. So killing them isn't permanent.

Your first shop is in the truck of the second or third tree and there you can use your joystick and firebutton tc select a higher grade of weapon if you have the dosh, some information from a manuscript and so on. It all costs though. At times, the wraith behind the counter might volunteer information and this and any other messages will be displayed at the bottom of the screen. In this way you learn to look on the top of trees for keys, one of which lurks in the boughs of the first tree.

Once you've made your exit you'll be thrown immediately back into the fray. Knock off a few more gribblies and you'll soon come across a door which is obviously not a shop. Enter this if you can – you have to have the right object – and you'll run smack into a miniature unicorn who'll give you the first letter of the counter spell.

The end of level monster – in this case it's a more fragile looking druid – casts a silvery net in your direction followed by a stream of crystalline bubbles. Should you run into either of these you're dead. She takes several shots to kill and when she does go it's in a magical puff of small explosions which reveal her true form – a small green goblin which



▲ *She's the one you've got to rescue.*



▲ *Not yer average grocer*



▲ *It's certainly an uphill struggle.*

scuttles off into the undergrowth!

And then it's on for more of the same on the second stage, only this time there are more nasties, more shops, more weapons. In fact buying extra weapons and information becomes almost ludicrous. The shopkeeper tells you to go to the next shop for an even better piece of equipment like the silver shield, and on getting there you are likely to be given directions to yet another shop to buy the Wiam Slayer and so on. The hassle is almost as bad as going shopping down Oxford Street in the West End on the day before Christmas.

Anyway, once you're kitted up to the eyeballs, you can easily deal with the baddies. Staying alive is then merely a matter of skill and agility. Finding your way down into dank caverns, making your way up cliff paths cut in the hillside and so on. And in this level, you'll meet up a little old crone who'll give you the next



letter of the elusive spell.

The third level starts off half way up a waterfall with you balanced precariously on a wooden platform. Jump up by leaping onto moving logs to get to terra firma and the safety of the trees. One word of warning. this waterfall is an awfully long one, so a badly timed jump will spill you into the drink.

The graphics are not so bad, more dull and dreary. Lots of shades of brown seem to feature heavily. It's shame really, because *Legend of Makaj* features large easy moving sprites and it offers quite a challenge. Though the game has been done before in various guises there are touches of originality buried in the depths.



▲ *If you think there story's wierd . . .*

DYNAMITE DUX

Rubber necked reindeer, bodyless sausage dogs, skateboarding cats and cuddly alligators hosted by a manic duck have to make up the most amusing game I've seen in a long while.

Dynamite Dux, from Sega, is the name and dynamite is the game if you can afford to let your friends see you playing something so daft and whacky.

Cartoon antics on the screen lead your duck, which goes by the unlikely name of Pin, to battle his way through a series of hilarious situations to rescue his mistress. She has gone the way of most females and has stupidly allowed herself to be captured by some evil, nasty minded, thick headed numbskull.

Pin, and Bin if you're playing in two player mode, are dressed in red and blue, strut around the screen armed only with their fists!? Clad in boxing gloves, these two feathered heroes can knock the living daylights out of any monstrosity silly enough to sneak up too close. And sneak up they will.

The variety of baddies is an endless source of inspiration to anyone wanting to get into cartoon graphics. Rabbits on pogo sticks bounce into the attack, their ears flapping wildly with every hop. Dog heads snarl at you from ground level, yapping round your heels, cats wearing protective helmets and whizzing around on wildly uncontrolled skateboards zoom in for the kill and horned reindeer head bound towards you on elongated rubbery necks.

Sandwiches, cream cakes and the like lie temptingly on the ground for you to pick up for energy. Rocks lie abandoned on the sidewalk and these can be used as temporary missiles. Patrolling these horror filled streets is a task only for those with a one-way deathwish.

It might look easy, but in the end you're a sitting duck as the sheer strength of this mutated army is likely to leave you quacking in desperation.

Your quest starts off initially in the midst of some town. Clean streets, no garbage and plenty of monsters. Soon signs appear leading you down into the subway where you can battle it out on the tracks with an even more dirty fighters than the ones above ground. Stairs eventually appear and you leap desperately for them only to be greeted by a fox manning a bazooka.

That did it for me. I got shot straight in the guts and fell in a ridiculous bundle of feathers to the ground. Luckily there is

continued on page 116 ▸



▲ *Down to the tube station at midnight.*

▼ *Cook, cook, cook, cookability.*



always another life and with a determined quack, Pin, or was it Bin, leapt to his feet to attack. Success. Armed with a bazooka, the rest of the mutants fell into disarray. That is until the end of level monster, a towering column of flame, appeared.

Shaped like the British Gas symbol and equipped with two huge eyes, the flame advanced. Like lightning I dived for a nearby water pistol and let him have it where it hurt most. Pssssst! He started to shrivel and then with a burst of energy overwhelmed me by spitting out lots of mini replicas of himself.

The battle of the fire monsters continues for a long time. Problem is you keep getting overwhelmed by the flames, drop your trusty water pistol and have to start again. As you can imagine, a bazooka is no help at all in this rather heated situation. Eventually you'll fight clear. The flame will fizzle out and you can storm onto the next level to continue your daft quests.

The graphics in *Dynamite Dux* are delightful and the game's got to be the cutest thing around. Real cartoon figures acting out a mad and fantastic scenario. Sega must be congratulated. The game makes a fun break from the serious business of piloting space craft, blasting aliens and single-handed, armed only with knife, wiping out whole batallions of enemy invaders.

If you want something whacky and you're not too fussed with blazing the trail of heroism then play *Dynamite Dux*. It might not be macho, but it's a laugh.

CABAL

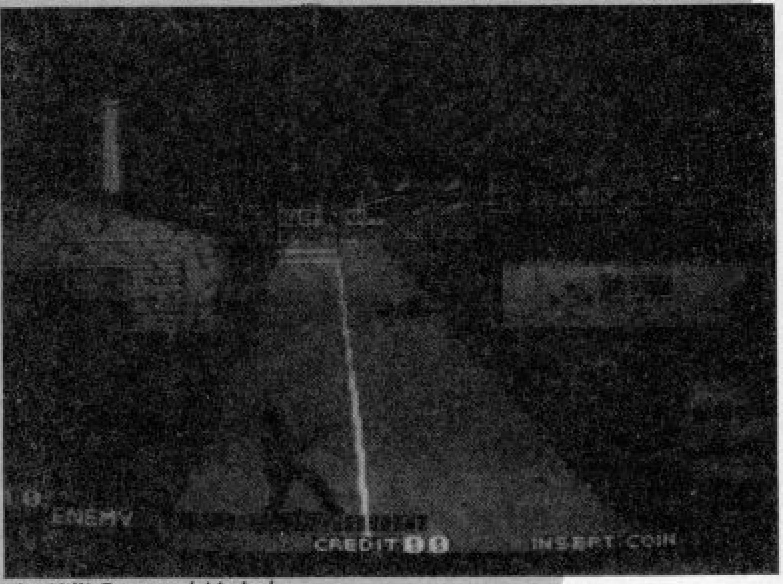
A game which uses the roller ball cabinet of *Combat School* and is played on the lines of *Operation Wolf* has got to be interesting. *Cabal*, a roaring battle against the might of the enemy, fits the bill nicely.

In fact this is one or two player game with simultaneous play for the second commando. Stuck at the bottom of the screen and only able to move left and right you have to knock out advancing enemy troops by roller balling your sights onto target and then hitting the trigger of your machine gun.

You're at a distinct disadvantage if you can't shoot straight in this crazy fight against the odds. The enemy come charging down the screen at you

You're in the open now and the only thing left for you to do is shoot better and quicker than them so that you can move onto the next level and have a quick breather.

The controls are very clever. When the roller ball is spun to the left and right your character runs across the screen accordingly. The sights are always further ahead of your commando and these can be moved up and down by rolling the ball the same way. So playing the game you need to keep an eye on both the position of your character — you don't want him to stop a bullet — while at the same time positioning the sights on your next target. Neat.



▲ *Kill! Destroy! Maim!*



▲ *Just you, and a few million rounds of ammunition.*



▲ *Take out that plane.*

On dying, some soldiers leave behind grenades which you can run over to pick up. These are great for destroying buildings and any tanks which come close enough.

Fast and addictive, especially with two players, *Cabal* is a must for commando freaks. The battle soon hots up. Leaving the outskirts of the jungle on the first level you belt off into the distance waving your gun in the air and kicking up your heels. So much for stealth and silence.

The next level takes you to the gates of the enemy compound, and boy is that heavily guarded. They wheel out the heavies to meet you, truckfulls of soldiers, tanks and snipers. You're kept pretty busy and even busier when you reach the HQ itself.

Buildings must be smashed, enemy jets must be grounded, fuel tanks exploded, and hovering choppers knocked out of the skies. As the screen and objects advance towards you, you will occasionally be able to hide behind objects though these never remain intact for long. Grenades are the most suitable form of defence in a hot spot as they have a small smart bomb effect on impact.

I thoroughly enjoyed *Cabal* and even though I'm a notoriously bad shot I found it a real challenge. The game with its four levels is extremely addictive and sets the adrenalin running. It might not be an original, but what better commando theme to resemble than *Operation Wolf*.

If you spin the roller ball very quickly your character will take a dive and roll head over heels across the ground in a very convincing fashion. Don't stand gawping in awe at this gymnastic feat though as you've got to rescue your sights which will have shot off to one side of the screen!

On catching a bullet your character will fall sprawling across the path and at this point the graphics suffer from a small flicker. It's not too bad and the rest of the game is very clear and drawn with a good sense of perspective and detail. The sound isn't too bad either — a good sense of perspective and detail. The sound isn't too bad either.



TRIAD - A NEW FORCE IN THE 16 BIT MARKET PLACE

Mean Machines

What a month! There's a quartet of new Sega games reviewed; one is the long-awaited conversion of the new martial arts arcade machine, Shinobi. There's also a sneak preview of some hot new PC Engine titles, including R-Type II and Galaga '88 – and they really ARE hot – as well as Britain's only Games Console Highscore table! What are you waiting for? Get reading!!

Aztec Adventure

For those of you hankering after more *Fantasy Zone, Aztec Adventure* is very much in the same mould and has a similar feel and look to it.

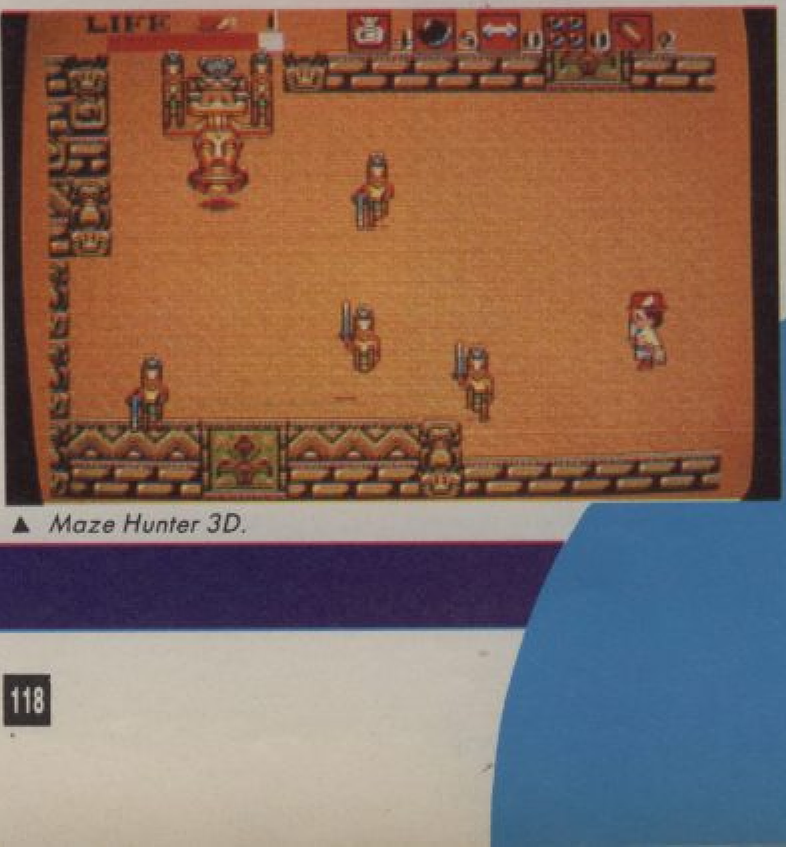
It is a one megabit cart (128K) and is a one player game. The scenario has you in a fierce labyrinth (?) searching for the long lost Aztec paradise. There are ten rounds and eleven stages to conquer.

You take the role of Nino and you can pick up some defensive help along the way by buying the aid of sword, carrying ducks and discretely dressed rabbits (kinda cute).. These characters follow you around and they are a good block if a nasty heads your way.

The nasties come in all shapes and sizes; bug eyed frogs, leaping toadies, demonic cats, rotating blobs with antlers, pod-spitting plants and nasty bugs ease out of the earth to swallow you up! You can use your sword to kill them (they can leave various weapons when killed) or simply run around them.

To help you there are five types of weapons: money, bombs, homing missiles, four way fire and mystery. These all start out at zero, and the more enemies killed the more you can fill them up, the weapons left are random.

Gameplay seems a bit slow at first, and to progress you have to go for it and hammer most things within reach. The screen scrolls when you hit the sides of the screen and you have to be prepared for just about anything to hit you when the next scene scrolls down. The graphics are nice and detailed and it really has an Aztec feel to it, the tunes are straight out of F Zone and enhance an already well weird game.



▲ *Maze Hunter 3D.*

Maze Hunter 3d



▲ *Shenobi.*

Yet another good reason to go and get some 3D specs!

This rates alongside Harrier 3D for the strength of the 3D perspective, it works very well without any reservations. You have to battle your way through a labyrinth which is made up of five areas (Metal, Rugged, Jungle, Ice and blaze) with each area having four levels

and three sub-levels. To get from one area to the next you have to collect a key.

The areas are inhabited by the likes of rolling dice (well that's what they LOOK LIKE), twirling cherries, hefty thugs, rotating blue boulders and numerous other brutes. Contact is fatal and you lose one of your three lives. To help you there are random power ups strewn around, these can give you high jumps to leap over enemies around you, and metal bars to clobber the opposition.

The graphics are pin sharp and crisply coloured and these factors enhance the 3D effect considerably. The screen scrolls around you and the gameplay is quite sedate. The real problem with Hunter 3D is that the play is quite repetitive, so although it is lucious to the eye it does not get the heart beating wildly.

- ► GRAPHICS 8
- ► SOUND 6
- ► PLAYABILITY 7
- ► OVERALL 6

Penguin Land

Boulderdash is a classic arcade type puzzle and *Penguin Land* is a cute interpretation of the original. You have to rescue your eggs.

The game comes on a one megabit cart and is due for release in September.

On game start there is the option to play any of the first thirty levels (there are fifty over all). If you reach level thirty the back twenty levels can then be chosen. There is also an editor facility where you can design AND SAVE up to fifteen levels of your own choice (fun, fun, fun).

To get your egg to safety you have to go down a vertically scrolling screen using your nose to break up the horizontal platforms, thus allowing the egg to fall to the next level down, if the fall is too high it will crack and you have to start over.

On the way down there are polar bears which just love to test your molar strength (a smack in the mouth) and they will crush your egg given half a chance – so do not give them one. If you get into trouble and lose track of where you are there is a pause facility where you can view the play area by scrolling the screen up and down (very useful).

Cuteygames rarely hit the spot in the UK, although they are popular in Japan.

game with cute graphics, tunes and almost fiendishly subtle puzzles to solve.

- ► GRAPHICS 8
- ► SOUND 7
- ► PLAYABILITY 7
- ► OVERALL 7



▲ *Aztec Adventure.*

Shenobi

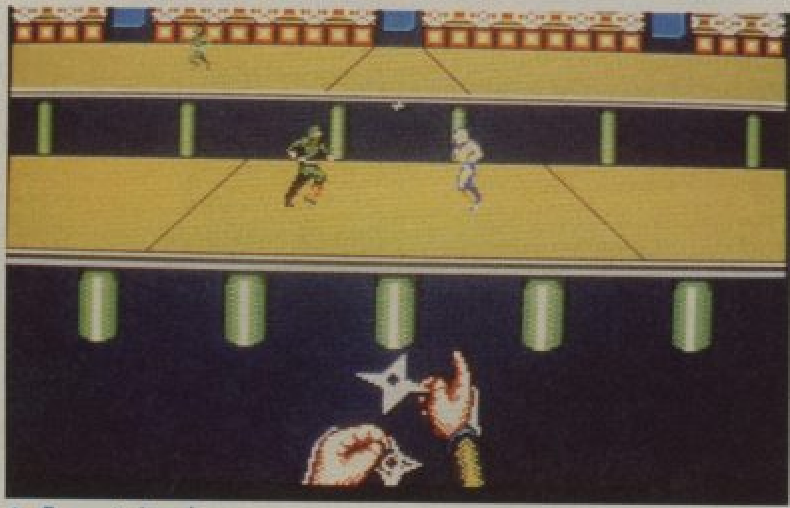
If you hankered after the *Shenobi* coin-op then hanker no more . . .

Sega has converted it to its console format. It comes on a two mega-bit (256K) cartridge and it is a one-player game.

Ninja Kids have been captured by Ninja outlaws and they are being held hostage in various parts of a city. You have to rescue them using your Ninja skills, there are five missions with three to four stages to each mission.

You can punch, kick, throw Shurken blades or use a sword.

The game starts with an amazing piccy of a Ninja with his eyes flitting from side to side, very realistic. On pressing fire you are presented with a map of the city and a little box over the area you are in. Then you do



▲ *Penguin Land.*

into the game.

You can walk left/right against the scrolling backdrop and the action can take place over two levels. You can switch between levels by pressing both buttons down and pushing up or down to scroll to the upper/lower level.

The kids are situated throughout the level and are protected by various types of Ninja, your best weapon is to throw darts at them or to drop down into a crouch or leap high and release a dart to take hidden Ninja out. There are enemy Ninja hidden behind barrels, sitting high up on walls and some have defensive shields to deflect your darts.

If you are hit by the enemy you lose energy, if your energy guage hits zero you lose a life.

Hidden amongst the power ups are bonus rounds, here you can wack up some score by throwing darts at Ninja which are running across two platforms in the distance (very *Disks of Tron*), when the round is over a Ninja jumps at you filling up most of the screen (lovely effect!!).

At the end of each stage is a biggie to kill, this brute is a hard beast, he throws blobs of what look like sick at you have dodge them and try to take him out before he does you. If you succeed you advance to the next round.

Graphics are well defined and colourful, sound is good and the gameplay is excellent, it just rolls off your fingers into the joystick, the moves become instinctive after a short while and this leads to some very satisfying play . . .

- ► GRAPHICS 8
- ► SOUND 6
- ► VALUE 8
- ► PLAYABILITY 8
- ► OVERALL 8

Mean Machines

PC Engine

The latest news on the PC Engine is the launch of a CD ROM unit. The potential for game with this add-on is staggering, imagine almost instant access to gigabytes of memory.

The five latest cards to fall into my palms are *Galaga 88, R-Type 2, Power League Baseball, Yu Yu Jinsei* and *Shanghai.*

After *R-Type 1* I could bearly wait for *R-Type 2!* The good news is that the graphics are as classy as the original as is the sound, but the gameplay is tortuously hard. As if to emphasis this you start with five credits/restarts in *R-Type 1* there were only three credits.

R-Type 2 is actually the last four levels of the original R-Type coin-op, in comparison to the coin-op it is faultless. It plays beautifully but you must learn the attack patterns FAST and hone those reflexes!! A nice feature of the game is that if you completed the R-Type 1 you were given a mission code, this code can be entered on *R-Type 2* carrying over your score and weapons on to the first level (that would be level five in the arcades).

The other arcade goody in the five is *Galaga '88,* an updated version of the Namco original.

I expected it to be a little old hat, what I got was a thumb-bendingly addictive blaster (I am up to level 28). You start by zapping the aliens which filter in strings from the sides of the screen, you can release blue warp pods hidden away in boulders on the screen if you collect two you can warp to a higher level in the galaxy for better point scoring.

Yu Yu Jinsei is a type of Monopoly of Life. Up to four people can play using the special joystick interface called the Multi-Tap,this plugs into the regular joystick port and allows four other pads to be plugged into its interface.

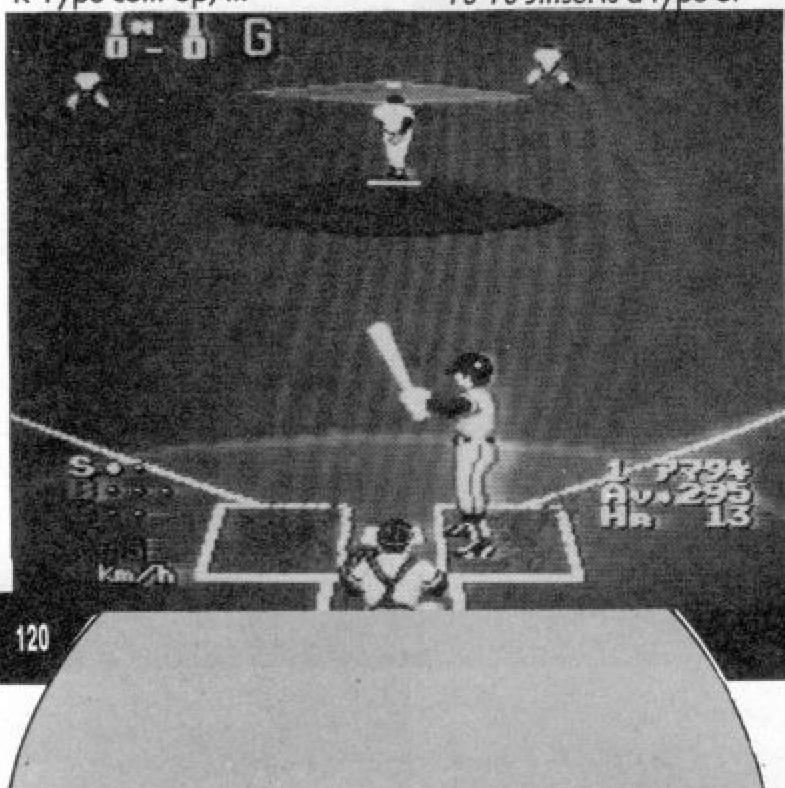
The game is played on a scrolling map and the dice is simulated by a rolling clock with the numbers one to ten being chosen at random.

The idea is to get to the goal picking up as much cash an experience of life as possible. Your car moves a number of steps depending on your 'dice' throw. The stops include wedding, having a baby, buying a house, bank, casino, concerts, school, airplane trips and various dangers.

As your car moves around the map there are some big sprites flying overhead; a biplane, flying saucer and a witch on a broomstick all very detailed and large!

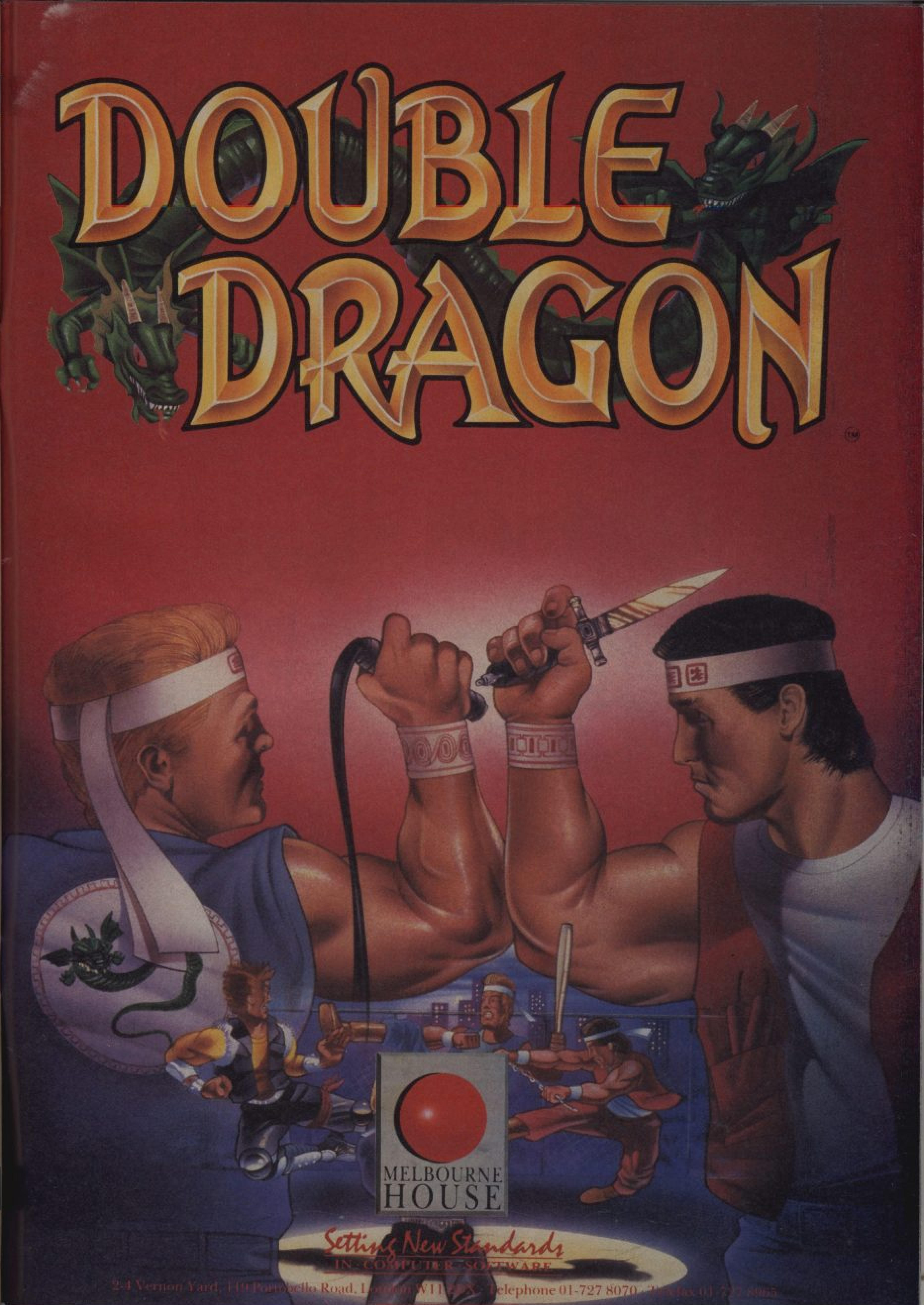
If you get to the end, there is a special sequence with a bunny girl showering champers over you and you get to sit watching the birds fly into the horizon on a sandy beach with a jazzy tune to keep you company.

The other two games are *Baseball* and *Shanghai* from Activision. *Shanghai* is the same as the 16-bit board game released a while back, it is very simple to play and quite addictive. It makes a pleasant change to use the old noodle every so often. *Baseball* is remarkably good.



High Scores

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DONKEY KONG JR	231,500	Tony Wright
DONKEY KONG 3	384,200	Lee Davidson
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GUMSHOE	231,000	Alex Bell
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Konami
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FLYING SHARK HOT FROM THE ARCADES. Flying Shark is the definitive conversion of this shoot-em-up, chart-topping classic hit from Taito. Develop your strategy as you face swarms of enemy planes, tanks, gun emplacements and a host of sea-borne craft as you bomb, blast and battle your way into arcade history.
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BUBBLE BOBBLE TAITO'S NO 1 ARCADE HIT IS HERE! Meet Bub and Bob, two of the busiest beasties you ever saw, as they battle their way across 100 levels of controlled chaos in search of their girlfriends (ahhh!). Jump around picking up goodies and secret weapons as you seek to outsmart your enemies, but beware...hang around too long and you'll face Baron von Blubba, from whom there's no escape!
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Mailbag

Perhaps we've been a touch mean in the past. As from now, the best letter to Mailbag each month wins a brand spanking new C + Vg T-shirt! So new, we're not even quite sure what they look like yet! So now you've no excuse, get writing to: Mailbag, Computer and Video Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

● Can you tell me how it's possible that I almost think of you as an old friend? Perhaps it's because this is already the third or fourth letter I'm writing to you . . .

OK, I know you get loadsaletters, and you can't print them all, but I would appreciate it if you would print one of those letters.

After reading the July issue of your otherwise utterly splendid magazine, I just felt ah enormous urge to write.

In your review about Aaargghhh (how about that for a funny title), you said you would give the first person who would write to you telling you the spelling error in this game would receive a free game. Now I'm not going to tell you this error (because I don't know it), perhaps when this game will be released for the

S(imply)-T(eriffic) computer (yep, I'm one of the how nearly one million ST users around on this tiny blue planet), and wnen this error is still around I could tell you.

But that's not what I wanted to say. First of all I fully understand that you'll have to check Software for errors, but I really think that this is going to far (or perhaps it was meant to be funny?, well if this is the case, then prepare for a lot of laughs............

Mark D. Garland

P.S. How about fixing me a date Lora Clark. Poutlicious indeed.

Editor's reply: Hopefully you'll like the fact that ace tipster Julian Rignall is handling much of Playmasters now, so it should go from strength to strength. And sorry, Mark, Lora says she's spoken for (though yours wasn't the only enquiry!)

● July issue Computer and Videogames:

1) Let us all look at page number......, DAMN THE PAGE NUMBERS ARE GONE, WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PAGE-NUMBERS, MY KINGDOM FOR SOME PAGENUMBERS...(ok I regained control over myself).

2) Somewhere around page 15. Comics, the one thing you absolutely can't afford to miss if your buying a COMPUTER-mag............

3) The review of Football Manager II on page....ehum just forget it. You know I had to load my copy of this good game, just to convince my neighbour (who by the way has an Amiga(ha)) that the screen shots were hot from the ST version (he nearly got a laughing-heart-attack as he saw the screen-shots) although your reviewer stated that the machine tested was the ST?.

4) How are you so far?, still game for a laugh?.

5) Well, talking about screen shots: ' How oh earth did you get those screen-shots from Patton vs Rommel, Gianni sisters and Vixen, did you use a colour-printer or something, cause they looked very awful!

6) Talking about Vixen: oh the ST the game scored the following points: 8,6,7,7,7 and on the Spectrum: 9,8,7,7,8. I really think that the ratings have been swapped (specially when the reviewer said and I quote 'The animation of the main figure is really very good... The ST animation is especially good... watch out for the way her hair bounces'). Am I right?

7) Are those screen-snots from Beyond the Ice Palace really from the Amstrad? If they are I'll have to reconsider my opinion oh this computer (e.g. screen-shots from Street-Fighter).

8) But the 'Play Masters' was a real puzzle for me. Right beneath the first picture (of Dungeoh Master) I read 'Justin gets his prize, but seems more interested in the champaghe'??!?$$%$£$?!?'?$?-*(Ahd Under the second picture 'The BIG ED cringes as Justin whips him oh Sidewinder'. Only after reading your (by the way nice one this one!) 'Winners stay on' competition I realised that those comments were meant to be beneath the pictures on that page.

9) Your review about Shadowgate (a truly nice 'adventure'). Now I know that the Gem used by Atari looks very much like the one used by the FAT-Mac. You printed a screen-shot from the Mac!!

Ok that's it for today, when I'll find more 'funny' mistakes in issues to come, I'll let you know (the next issue will be on sale on August the 16th, but won't be available until September the 8th . . .)

Kind regards and Still your Devoted One

Rob Nehgermah
Holland

PS I am not an Arcadia, Mastertronic or Melbourne House employee, nor am I related in any way to one of their employees.

PPS. Just replace the 'h' with the letter 'n' page 41 in the July issue 'But then again they never noticed in the first place.' A really nice joke!!!

● Me and my mate think you're magazine is ****!!! We are Fash and Tyrant, and we really don't give a damn how much fizzy drinks are, nor are we great fans of trendy new delux water pistols. Come to think of it we don't give a pig's left ear about comics. What on earth is a motorbike ad doing in a computer mag? Can you play Space Harrier on it? Why lie about being the best selling computer mag? You won't print this letter because you can't handle the criticism.

Tyrant and Fash

Editor's reply: C+VG has always had little bits and pieces on things other than computer games, the fact that we carry ads from other than software houses shows how seriously big name companies take both the magazine and the computer games industry, and we say we're the best seller because we are, and now by an even greater margin.

● I have been reading your magazine and have had little to complain about, and though I have read others yours is by far the cheapest and coolest on the market.

But, in the March issue there were two *Codemasters* games reviews, *ATO Simulator* and *Jet Bike Simulator*, both of which were put down, and although this is perhaps fair comment it puts down the Codemasters label as a whole.

BMX, *Pro Snooker* and *Jet Bike Simulators* all by Codemasters are great value at £1.99 but you didn't review any of these. I am sure many will agree with these points, so why don't you donate a page to Codemasters games to show they are a better label than portrayed.

Kevin Harris
Sandy Beds

Editor's reply: Are you sure your name isn't really Richard Darling? We don't slag off labels, just individual products if they aren't really up to scratch.


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AD INDEX



Prepare to be amazed! Strapped onto the cover of next month's C + VG is a FREE cassette of one of the year's arcade sensations – R-Type. Converted by Activision, the tape will feature a playable demo of the entire first level of the Spectrum and Commodore versions. 16-bit owners needn't feel left out because we have an extremely generous money-off voucher allowing you to save pounds on the game. There'll also be pages and pages of exclusive reviews, red-hot tips and all the latest news and previews.

And all for only £1.10. It's in the shops on October 15 – order early!

Out To Lunch

John Minson provides the complete guide to the PC Show in unique A-Z style. The rich fabric of the biggest beano in computerdom is all here – from the under dressed girls to the over rated games. Is it worth the entrance fee?

It's here again – the 'it' being the PCW Show – or PC Show as it is now known, the W having got lost during its move from the Olympian heights to the baronial splendour of Earl's Court.

The change in venue makes crystal-ball gazing tricky, even for experienced exhibitions like myself, but at least I can pass on some homespun wisdom which will help you get the most from the show.

Arrivals: Earl's Court tube station has two exits, so the readers of other magazines will lose vital seconds circling the platform, looking for the right one. But canny C&VG-ies will head straight for the one marked Exhibition (clever – huh) where, tube ticket at the ready, with Show ticket (you did buy in advance, didn't you?) clutched firmly in the other hand, you'll rush the barriers and beat everyone else to the stands. Then when they role up, sweating in their anoraks, you can say very loudly, "Pity they won't be deomnstrating that CD ROM again. The 3D interactive adventure with digitally sampled dragon roars was quite something!"

First Impressions: These can be overwhelming. Some people rush wildly around, trying to see everything in the first five minutes.

Me, I stay cool – saunter over to the nearest bar, where there's always a large contingent of gssiping software people, and earwig on what the action is. You can pick up amazing bits of information but there is one problem – the cost of drinks appears to be governed by the size of the show.

Press Privileges: These are manifold. From the free booze urged upon you by PR people (thanks in advance, you all) to the T-Shirts which not only ensure that you won't freeze on the way home but also allow you to open up a market stall once the binge is over, to the hardened hack the show is one big blag.



▲ *Beware of the show bimbos warns Minson.*

But what to do if you're not a journalist? There's no easy solution. Editing a fanzine, particularly if the circulation is one hand written issue, specially prepared for your showtime lig, will result in two fingers, not freebies. Your best bet is to remind the PR person that today's spotty little oik is tomorrow's spotty, bug hack and hope they'll let you have a badge or two to tide you over until I grow too old/senile/inebriated to churn out this trash.

Hands On Experience: Lots of this. You'll be able to play all the latest releases (see next section) – providing you can get close enough to the micros. This is not to be confused with Legs Off Experience, in which a disk, micro, monitor, Microprose's flight simulator, etc – grows legs so you can try it at home.

Don't even think it, punk!

Another aspect of Hands On not to try is with the blonde beauties who adorn some of the stands. Ever since System 3 offered us Charlotte and her dancing Harlots a couple of years ago and got their plugs pulled by the Whitehouse brigade, things have been more restrained on the page three front. However, should you see one of these fair females, stick to Peeking unless you want a Poke in the eye.

Note: These bimbos are known as 'Personality Girls', which seems a little odd as standing in a swimsuit with a silly grin on your face doesn't seem to indicate much of the aforementioned quality, but it does lead neatly into our next category which is . . .

Technical Terms: There is one extremely imprtant technical term for all visitors to PC and that is New product. Actually this is several terms, depending on how ot's written. New Product is the hundred percent fresh program or piece of hardware that you're just dying to try/ NEW PRODUCT is also fresh but served with a thick sauce of hype to disguise the fact that it's scrag end rather than rump steak. 'New Product' is the same one that you saw last year only now it's nearing completion – honest!

Crowds: Obviously a popular show like PC attracts the masses but nothing can prepare you for the solid sauna of sweating bodies that you'll encounter. It's hotter than a Commodore power supply. My advice? Stay away so that I can get around more easily.

No – not really. PC wouldn't be half the fun without the Battle Zone element. You can try brute strength, derived from American Football, shouting '22 – 34 – 18! Hut, hut, hut!'

But I prefer the sneaky approach: "Phew. It's so hot on the palace stand Maria Whittaker has just taken off her chain mail bikini." It can empty an aisle within seconds.

One stunt that I've never tried but you may care to is smuggling in your skateboard, getting up on the balcony, selecting a stand and dropping in on the masses from a great height with a truly rad Ollie to Hurtcity kamikaze drop! Yo dude!

With this in mind you should be able to get the most from the PC, but before you leave Earl's Court don't miss The Great Out to Lunch – Spot The Minson Contest. Actually I won't be that hard to locate. I've given you enough clues as to where to look already. And when you finally do find which bar I'm lurking in, approach me (carrying this issue of C&VG, natch) and say, "You are John Minson and I think you're a genius." Then you can buy me a Bloody Mary and be seen drinking with me as your prize. See – I said it was liggers paradise!


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